



Painted by Duchateau 1792.

Engraved by Nodder 1798.

SELIM III.
The Reigning Grand Signor.
— **ÆT. 31.** —

London Published May 1st 1798 by T White Fleet Street

TRAVELS

IN THE YEAR 1792

THROUGH

FRANCE, TURKEY, AND HUNGARY,

TO

V I E N N A:

CONCLUDING WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF THAT CITY.

IN A SERIES OF FAMILIAR LETTERS

TO A LADY IN ENGLAND.

BY

WILLIAM HUNTER, *Esq.*

OF THE INNER TEMPLE.

Ignotis errare locis, ignota videre
Flumina gaudebat; studio minuente laborem.

OVID.

SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

IN TWO VOLUMES,

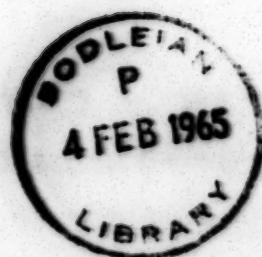
VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY T. BENSLEY,

FOR J. WHITE, FLEET-STREET,

1798.



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SECOND VOLUME.

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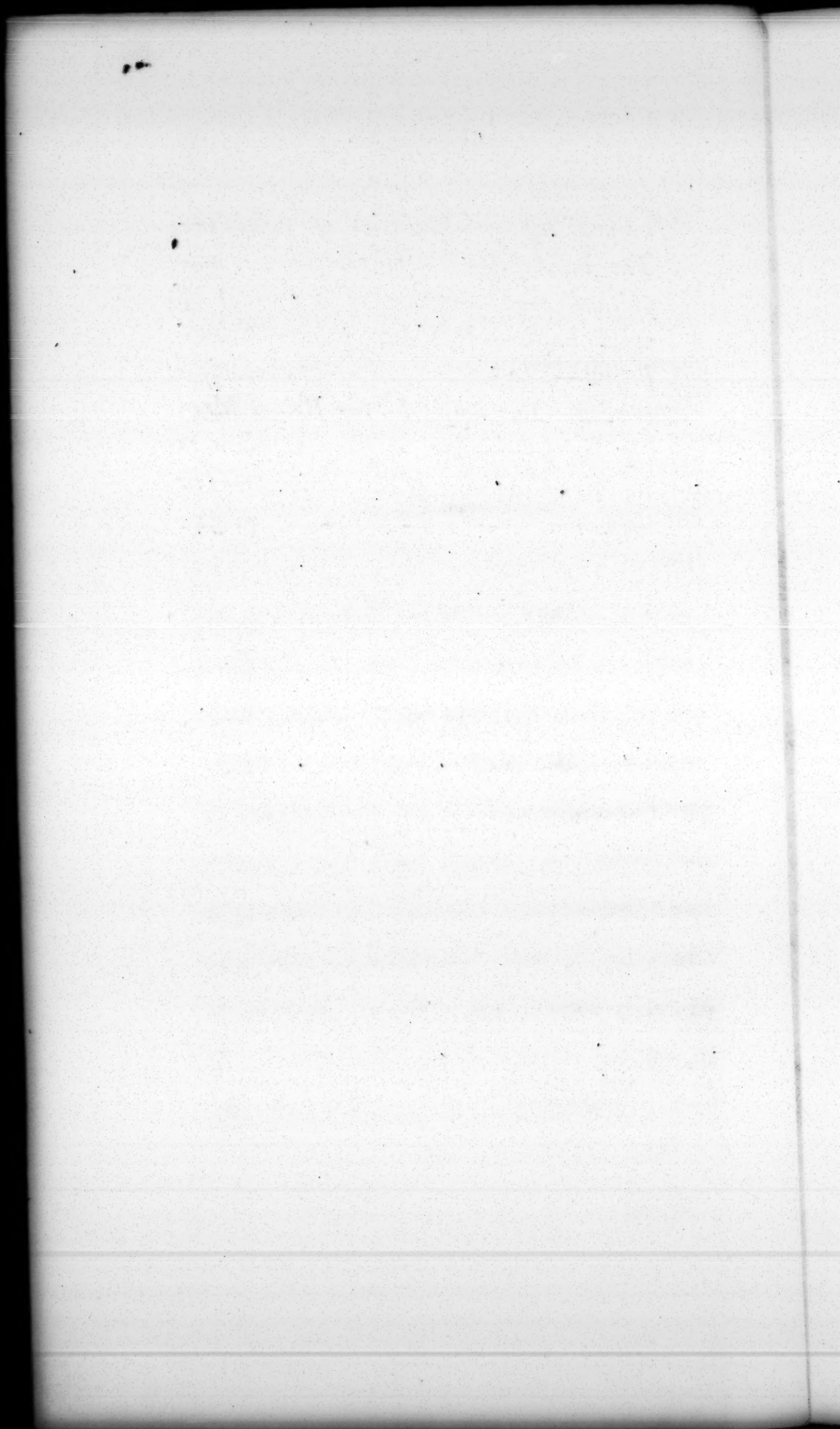
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T R A V E L S
THROUGH
FRANCE, TURKEY, &c.

LETTER XV.

Constantinople, May 10, 1792.

IN consequence of a multiplicity of engagements, from which I could not possibly disentangle myself, I was obliged yesterday to conclude my letter very abruptly. I have not, however, allowed myself to remain long idle, and by resuming my narrative so soon, the whole will in all probability be conveyed to you by

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the same post, so that your curiosity will not suffer very materially from the anxiety of suspense.

St. Sophia has served as a model to all the other moschs, which are built more or less in imitation of it. The Solimany, founded by the munificence of Solyman the second, approaches nearest to its prototype both in the costliness of its marble, and the size and proportions of its principal dome. The next in rank is the mosch of Validé*, the favourite sultana of Ibrahim, and mother of Mahomet the fourth, an enterprising and ambitious woman, who for many years directed the councils, and managed the affairs of the Porte, and was the first female that ob-

* Validé-Sultana is a general appellation for sultana-mother.

tained permission to build a public place of worship.

As the grand seignor goes publicly to mosch but once a week, which is on a friday; the day after our arrival, we made a point of seeing the ceremony.

Crossing over from Galata *, before we landed at Constantinople, we employed above an hour in rowing about the harbour, which presents one of the most lively, beautiful, and interesting spectacles imaginable. It is very spacious, being fifteen or sixteen miles in circumference, and the water is covered with ships of war, merchantmen from different quarters of the globe, and a surprising number of boats which are in continual motion, and

* Galata forms the northern entrance of the harbour, and is separated from Constantinople by a narrow channel.

remarkable for their elegance of shape and decoration.

This harbour, on account of its curved form and the riches which it brought to the city, was known to the ancients under the expressive epithet of the *golden horn*. The water, not being subject to the vicissitudes of tides, is always nearly of the same depth, and merchant-vessels, at all seasons of the year, can unload their cargoes at the wharf.

The old walls of Constantinople, which are in some parts double, and defended by towers, are still in tolerable repair; but the streets have a more gloomy appearance than those of Galata or Pera. They are narrow, dirty, and miserably paved, and, from the unevenness of the ground, are very fatiguing to foot passengers. All the houses are built of wood, which is

brought from the coasts of the Black sea, and they consist, in general, of two stories, of which the upper one projects so much, that in many places you can shake hands across a street. You are now and then surprised by the appearance of a bazar, a market, a caravansary, a mosch, or a public bath, which diverts the attention from the insipid dulness of private dwellings. In our way to the seraglio, we passed through the street of Adrianople, which is the widest and longest in the city. We were attended in this excursion by a janizary and a dragoman, or interpreter, the one serving, as a security to our persons, the other, to explain to us what we were about to see. A number of these dragomans are attached to the different embassies, and they are generally people of information. They are very

expert at languages, and their knowledge in law and phyfic sometimes raises them to the highest offices of the state. Many of them, however, are too prudent to accept of places at a court, where nothing is stable, where one revolution speedily destroys what another has produced, and where the road to preferment is also the road to ruin.

When we reached the seraglio, the fultan * was on his return, which is an exact repetition of the ceremony when he goes. My expectations had been considerably raised by an ideal contemplation of the pompous train of an oriental monarch, and, as is generally the case, when the reality was presented to my senses, my disappoint-

* The name of the present emperor is Selim III. He succeeded to the throne of his ancestors on the 6th of April 1789.

ment was proportionable: for after the splendid processions of the other parts of Europe have been seen, certainly those of the Turkish emperor are not calculated to produce much surprise.

Before his arrival, a number of his attendants were continually riding in and out of the seraglio, in a disorderly manner. Sometimes twenty or thirty succeeded, two abreast, when the line was abruptly broken off, and quite discontinued for a few minutes, at the expiration of which, it recommenced. The captain of the janizaries, the chief of the eunuchs, and several of the other great officers of state attended. Their horses were richly caparisoned, and adorned with gold chains and other rich trappings, some of which were curiously embossed, and studded with precious stones: but their own robes,

though costly, being lined with furs of great value, were rather plain than brilliant. As they passed, they were saluted by the janizaries, a rank of whom were stationed on each side. Their manner of salutation is remarkable, and exhibits a disgusting picture of Eastern servitude and humility. They incline their heads to one side, exposing their bare necks, and intimating by this gesture, that their lives are at the entire disposal of these supercilious tyrants. How the character of man shrinks from the dignity which nature meant it to assert in the scale of creation, when it submits to such demonstrations of ductile imbecility and timid baseness! They were very shabbily clothed, but as they receive hardly any pay from their master, *they*, poor fellows! are very excusable. The sultan did not appear till near the close of

the proceſſion. The turban of ſtate was carried before him, and he was ſurrounded by about thirty pages on foot, who wore caps ornamented with immenſe plumes of feathers, thickly planted, and extended in the ſhape of a fan. He is rather a handſome man, about thirty years of age, and was mounted on a beautiful Arabian ſteed *. He looked remarkably grave, and noticed nobody. The janizaries repeated their ſalutation both to the turban and the emperor as they paſſed.

Whiſt I was contemplating the features of this mighty potentate, ſo far from

* There are no carriages in Conſtantinople, and the ſultan generally goes about the city on horſeback. — When he takes a ride a few miles into the country, he is attended by a numerous guard, which is very diligent in keeping the road clear from the intrusion of ſtrangers. His horſes are brought from Arabia and the remotest provinces of the empire, and are purchaſed at a great expence.

feeling any emotions of awe and respect, I rather regarded him with an eye of alternate pity and contempt. And, indeed, although possessed of one of the finest and most extensive countries in the world, his situation is far from being enviable. Before he was elevated to the throne, he was kept a close prisoner, and never allowed to stir without the walls of the seraglio. Totally uninformed, and blinded by the imposing artifices and servile adulation of his ministers, his life is a constant delusion, and he is the continual sport of craft and corruption. The knowledge of every virtue which can ennoble the heart and refine the understanding of man is carefully suppressed, that the hatred of vice may not be imbibed, and that its votaries may not be punished. Unacquainted with the noblest feelings of our nature, and

forbidden the enjoyment of a friendship founded on mutual esteem, all his pleasures must flow from a contaminated source. Bribery, corruption, and cruelty, are the fundamental principles of his government, and the dread of his people is the support and security of his power. Such is the humiliating portrait of a despot's life !

The seraglio, which was begun by Mahomet II. is a vast but inelegant pile of stone buildings, situated on a point of land which runs into the sea, and which is the spot where formerly flourished the city of Byantium. It is inclosed by high walls, which are said to be nearly three miles in circumference, and is enlivened with gilded spires and turrets, and a multitude of small domes which are roofed with lead. Including the haram, it consists of twelve

courts, which have been erected at different periods, and according to the various tastes of the reigning princes; so that but little attention, if any, has been paid to uniformity, or the common rules of architecture. The apartments are spacious and richly furnished, though not with furniture that would correspond with our ideas of taste. They are chiefly ornamented with Turkish inscriptions; sentences of Arabic; pictures which are very coarsely executed, and loaded with the most glaring colours; fountains; marble basins; sofas; baths; and the presents which have been made by the ambassadors from foreign courts, such as mirrors, vases, carpets, &c. The upper apartments are occupied by the women, and have domes with golden crescents, cabinets, balconies, galleries, and terraces.

The gardens, which are very extensive, are reserved for the fultan and his ladies. They are planted with cypresses and other evergreens, and are adorned with parterres of flowers, with fountains, alcoves, and chiosks.

These chiosks are a kind of pavilion, raised a few feet from the ground, and open on every side, to admit a free circulation of air. Many of them are fitted up at an enormous expence, being paved and inlaid with precious marbles, and adorned with magnificent fountains, painted ceilings, embroidered sofas, and rich carpets. They are frequently erected on the borders of rivers or pieces of water, and most of the opulent Turks have them in their gardens, where they sleep in the summer time after dinner, or sit chatting with their

women, enjoying the coolness of the evening breeze.

The principal entrance into this remarkable palace is through a large gate, whence the title of the Sublime Porte originates. It is very lofty, and arched at top; and, on each side, there are several windows and Arabian inscriptions. About four hundred porters keep guard at the different gates, of whom forty or fifty are stationed at this. These are the ministers of vengeance whom the sultan dispatches to his provinces for the heads of those governors, who have disobeyed his orders, or disappointed his expectations.

Of the twelve courts, strangers are only admitted into the two first, which contain the offices for the residence of the menial servants; an infirmary for the

sick, where the most expert physicians and surgeons regularly attend; the stock of wood for the consumption of the palace; a long range of kitchens, which have domes with holes in the centre to let out the smoke; a small stable, where those horses are kept which are reserved for the emperor's particular use; the divan; the treasury; and the mint. The second court is better paved, and, in every respect, much handsomer than the first. It is laid with turf in the middle, embellished with fountains, and surrounded with a gallery which is supported by pillars of marble. The divan, where the foreign ministers receive their public audiences, and where they deliver their credentials and presents, previous to their admission to the sultan, is nothing more than a large hall, covered with

wainscoting. Here it is that the grand vizier presides as judge, and determines all civil and criminal causes. He convenes a court four times a week for the dispatch of business, and every subject of the empire, even the meanest, has the privilege of being heard. But, as trials are determined very rapidly; as little trouble is taken to investigate the truth; as the testimony of any witness is admitted; as the rich, in every country, discover their influence; and as there is no appeal from the decision of the judge; the innocent and the guilty are frequently confounded together; and it is but seldom that strict and impartial justice is administered. On points of religion or affairs of conscience, the vizier applies to the mufti, who is always present, and is guided by his advice. In the provincial towns the cadis are in-

vested with nearly a similar extent of judicial authority; but as their integrity is more exposed to the allurements of a bribe, and the effects of prejudice are felt in greater force, the source of justice is still more corrupt. Neither the religious orders nor the janizaries are amenable to the ordinary courts, but have their own separate tribunals. Our conductor also pointed out to us the place where the grand vizir's head is generally exposed, after deposition. At this moment that important but perilous office is vacant. The last who filled it was an able and popular man; but through the cabals and intrigues of his enemies, he was lately dismissed, and another is not yet appointed to succeed him. The almost invariable rule of decollation was waved in his favour, and he has been permitted to retire; but, being

very rich, he is perhaps reserved for a day of necessity.

In the mint a number of men are constantly employed in manufacturing the various coins of the country, which, according to the exigencies of the state, are debased and diminished. At present, their intrinsic value is so small, that, out of Turkey, they will scarcely pass for any thing. One part of this office is allotted for the fabrication of ornamental gold and silver for the seraglio, and they shewed us several articles which were nearly finished, and the workmanship of which was very good.

This is all that a stranger is permitted to explore. To penetrate farther, the penalty would be death.

The internal government of the seraglio is entirely under the management of

the chiefs of the black and white eunuchs. The *kissar aga*, or chief of the black eunuchs, is an office of the highest trust and emolument. He has the superintendence of all the royal mosques, and the appointment of the officers attached to their service. He is purveyor to the pleasures of his master, has an absolute sway in the apartments of the women, and is the responsible guardian of their honour. The number of these unhappy females is not limited, but depends entirely on the taste, or constitution, or caprice of the reigning prince. They are the most beautiful and accomplished women of the empire, being purchased by the grand seignor's agents, or sent to him in presents by the governors of the provinces. They are never allowed to stir without the walls of the *seraglio*, where most of them waste their bloom

in the silence of neglect, or the torments of despair, and where every word, and action, and look, is rigidly watched by the jealous vigilance of their haughty and sul-
len keepers.

The capi aga, or chief of the white eunuchs, also possesses a very extensive authority. He commands all the pages of the palace, and superintends the education of the young men who are brought up in the seraglio. Those, who have a promising appearance, are taught to read the Persian, Arabic, and Turkish languages, and are thoroughly initiated in the mysterious duties of the religion of Mahomet. They are besides instructed in all the Eastern accomplishments, such as, riding on horseback, drawing the bow, and darting the jirid, and are frequently advanced from the domestic service of the

palace, to the command of armies, and the government of provinces. The strictest attention is paid to their morals. They are severely chastised for the slightest misdemeanor, and are obliged to pass through a long and perilous noviciate, before they arrive at the honour of attending on the person of their master. Those who give no proofs of genius, but are endowed with strong and active powers of body, are reserved for the menial offices of the palace, and make up the list of porters, cooks, butchers, and gardeners.



Near the outer gate of the seraglio there is a most magnificent fountain, which was built by Achmet III. and is richly adorned with paintings, and several inscriptions in Turkish and Arabic characters.

Every fultan, when he dies, has a mausoleum erected to his memory. On

our return home, we stopped to see that of the late emperor. His ashes are surrounded by those of his children, who were numerous, and each coffin is covered with embroidered cloth, and splendidly decorated. Lamps and wax tapers are kept constantly burning, and the father's tomb is distinguished from the others, by a turban, which is placed on a cushion at his head.

The ceremonies, which the Turks observe at the interment of their dead, are very curious. When any person dies, it is immediately published by the dreadful howlings which are made by the women, belonging to the house. All his relations and friends then assemble, and join in these lamentations, after which a mournful dirge is sung to his praise, and a solemn prayer offered up for his future hap-

pinefs. Sometimes, thefe pitiful ftrains laft for two or three days, and thofe who are not difpofed to exprefs fuch violent fymptoms of grief, for fuch a length of time, hire people for the occafion. The deceafed is conveyed on a bier to the place of interment, and if he be a man of confequence, he is attended by a numerous and pompous train of horfes, flaves, and domestics. On his arrival, he is enveloped with a fheet, which is left open at the head and feet; and boards are placed over his body that the foil may lie lightly on him. When his remains are depofited in the earth, the howlings are renewed, incenfe is burnt to chafe away evil fpirits, and cypreffes are planted at each end of the grave, which, whilft young and tender, are taken great care of by his relations, who are, in general, very

desirous that they should thrive. It is imagined that the defunct, shortly after his interment, undergoes a severe examination, and that, according to the life he has led, he is tormented by the agents of hell, or comforted by the ministers of heaven, who reveal to his enraptured sight, the hanging gardens, delicious fruits, resplendent fountains, and beautiful damsels, which will be his reward, on his entrance into paradise.

As the Turks never destroy any monuments, nor bury twice in the same spot, the ground about Constantinople, which is consecrated to the dead, is very extensive. Their burying-places are always situated near the highways, that they may excite the attention and compassion of passengers, and induce them to pray for the peace and felicity of the departed

spirits; and the cypresses with which they are planted, give them a very solemn appearance. The monuments consist of two large stones, which are raised at the head and foot of the grave, and many of them are extremely costly. They are frequently of fine marble, and are ornamented with inscriptions in letters of gold, and white or green turbans or bonnets: and some few, which are erected to the memory of persons of rank, are enclosed with an iron rail which is painted green. But they seem to groan under the weight of their decorations, and are totally devoid of taste. Those of the women are not allowed these fastidious distinctions.

One day, as I was walking about the city, I had an opportunity of observing the devout attention which the Mussul-

mans pay to the funeral rites of their countrymen. I met six people, carrying a man, who, but a few hours before, had died of the plague. When they were fatigued, they put down the bier in the middle of the street, and shortly after, as many others took it up. This ceremony was repeated by the nearest spectators, till it was conveyed to the place of interment; it being one of the most sacred duties of their religion, never to refuse their assistance on this awful occasion. A priest marched solemnly before, and chanted aloud, as he led the way.

The castle of the Seven Towers is situated on that angle of the city, which borders on the sea of Marmara. It is built in the form of a pentagon, and the roof is covered with lead. The treasure of the grand seignor was formerly de-

posited there, but it has since been converted into a state prison, to which the foreign ambassadors are sent, whenever their masters declare war against the Porte. The sultan considers himself so superior to every other potentate, that he scorns to respect those rights and privileges which are so rigidly enforced in christian countries, in favour of the representatives of crowned heads*.

At a short distance from the Hippodrome, there is a large subterraneous building, which is arched, and supported by a great many bulky stone pillars. At present it is occupied by silk spinners; but is conjectured to have been formerly a reservoir for water, that, in case

* The last foreign minister that was imprisoned there was the Russian envoy in 1784, previous to the commencement of hostilities.

of fire, there might be an immediate supply. If it were still reserved for that purpose it would not be amiss, for the ravages of this devouring element are very frequently and very severely felt. From this place we went to see the emperor's wild beasts, which are kept in an old tower; but we found nothing very curious or rare, and most of the capital cities of Europe can boast of a better collection.

Several of the hans at Constantinople, are magnificent buildings, of a square form, and so spacious that they are capable of accommodating two or three hundred people. The monasteries, though pretty numerous, are not to be remarked for their elegance. They, however, in general, possess the most eligible situations, which is the case, I think, in every

country where monasteries have been erected. The markets are extensive, and well supplied, particularly with game, poultry, fish and vegetables.

Galata and Pera are the two principal suburbs of Constantinople, and, separately taken, would each form a respectable city. There is another small suburb, called Topana, beyond which, the Turks have an arsenal, where they cast their cannon.

Galata is defended by a wall, flanked with towers, which was erected by the Genoese, in whose possession it remained for many years, and is still in tolerable repair. Most of the European merchants have counting-houses and magazines here, on account of the convenience of the situation, Galata forming the entrance of the harbour from the north.

To protect them, in some measure, from the dreadful havock which the fires occasion, many of them have two or three fire-proof warehouses*, where they store their most valuable merchandize; for the the Turks being fatalists, disdain to introduce into their country the inventions of more enlightened people, and have never yet been prevailed upon to provide themselves with fire-engines. The quays are extensive, and are planted with artillery, which, to the great amusement of the people, is discharged on days of festivity. Some of the guns are of an enormous caliber, but they are all without carriages.

From Galata there is a considerable ascent to Pera, which stands in a delight-

* The European merchants at Smyrna have also warehouses built on a similar construction, which, in Turkish cities, are the only security against fire.

ful situation, commanding a view of Constantinople, the seraglio, the harbour, and the distant hills of Asia, and is the residence of all the ambassadors and foreign ministers, whose houses, after the Eastern manner, are styled palaces. Many of the merchants have also their dwelling-houses here, for it is by far the most agreeable place to live in. The streets are wider and more scattered, and the air is consequently purer, than either at Constantinople or Galata.

We were so desirous of seeing the principal bazar, that we overcame our dread of the plague, and one morning crossed over to Constantinople for that express purpose. It is a large square structure, neatly paved with flat stones, and covered with domes, which are sustained by arches

and pilasters. Merchants are drawn from the most distant parts of the empire to make purchases at this grand repository, which is also the receptacle of half the idle people of the city, who keep fauntering about for hours, drinking coffee and sherbet, and examining and cheapening goods. The shops, which are furnished with all kinds of merchandize, are kept very clean, and some of them are ornamented with paintings. Each distinct trade is carried on in a separate quarter, and the jewellers, embroiderers, and cutlers make a most splendid appearance.

The slave market, which is at a small distance from this bazar, we did not venture to enter, but I am told that it exhibits a curious scene. The Jews carry on this unfeeling and infamous traffic,

and bring the women from Greece, Candia, Mingrilia, Georgia, Circassia *, and still more remote provinces. A multitude of females, of various ages and descriptions, are in constant attendance at this grand emporium of legal prostitution, expecting every day to be transferred into other hands. Those, on whom nature has lavished her bounties, fetch considerable sums of money, but those, who are destitute of personal attractions, sell at a very low rate, and are destined to fill the vilest domestic offices. Before a bargain is struck, they are obliged to display all the accomplishments they have acquired, and to submit to an examination of their charms which is altogether offen-

* From Mingrilia, Georgia, and Circassia, alone (which constituted the ancient kingdom of Colchos) upwards of fifteen thousand slaves are exported annually.

five to modesty. What can beauty expect, when it is thus degradingly bartered for gold, but lasting and consummate misery and contempt? Even those, who are purchased for the seraglio, have not much cause to rejoice at their fortune, for although some few of them may be distinguished by the caresses of the sultan, the greater part is suffered to wither in neglect, and, when their master dies, they are removed to the old seraglio, where they linger out the remainder of life in hopeless solitude and despair. If they have children, they are generally destined to weep over their premature deaths, at the accession of a new prince, it being the jealous and detestable policy of the Ottoman court to banish all dread of competition by the fatal application of the bow-string.

The most beautiful girls are not, however, to be procured at the public market; but are kept in the private houses of the Jews, where they are educated at a great expence, being taught to embroider, to dance, to sing, and to play on divers musical instruments; and where they are initiated in the practice of all the arts and allurements which the tenderest of passions can inspire.

Besides the slaves that fill the harems of the men, most of the Turkish ladies of distinction, maintain a numerous retinue of these unfortunate females. No expence is spared on their dress and education, and their chief business is to attend at the toilette of their mistress, to adjust or change her attire, or to endeavour to beguile the hours away, by singing or dancing, and playing on the

lute or guitar. Their dances, which are highly voluptuous, resemble the Spanish fandango, and they throw themselves into a copious variety of languishing and indecent attitudes, which create ideas they can never realize, and provoke appetites they can never enjoy.

The Turks are extremely jealous of their women, so that females of condition are seldom to be seen in the streets. Even the Greeks, Armenians and Jews do not allow them much liberty, but confine them a great deal at home, where they amuse themselves, as well as they can, with conversation, bathing, drinking coffee and sherbet, and embroidery at which they are very expert. When, however, they do go abroad, they are obliged to wear a veil and a loose robe, which effectually conceal both their faces

and persons. At home, their dresses are surprisngly gorgeous and expensive, and those belonging to the great men squander immense sums of money in the articles of embroidery and jewels. Their turbans and girdles are bespangled with diamonds and other precious stones, and their hair is not unfrequently braided with pearls. One of the most important occupations of their indolent lives is to deck out their persons to the best advantage. They shape their brows, paint their cheeks, stain the tips of their fingers red, and pencil a black mark round their eyes, which they imagine adds to their brilliancy and expression.

A Turk may legally possess four wives, a law of the most pernicious and iniquitous nature, as it excludes the poor from the possession of women, and, by

an improper division of the sexes, bursts afunder every bond of morality, and engenders every species of odious and unnatural vice. Their marriages are attended with a surprising degree of pomp and ceremony. The parties never see each other till every thing is finally adjusted, when the bride, amidst the rejoicings of her relations and friends, is conveyed on horseback to her husband's house. He provides the dowry, and, in case of repudiation, unless he can assign a reasonable cause, is obliged to continue the payment of her settlement: nor can he reclaim her, should his affection return, till she has passed a night with another man.

The Turks consider their women as an inferior race of beings, and proudly imagine, that they are sent into the world

merely for the purposes of propagation and domestic superintendence. If they fulfil these duties, the law of Mahomet does not exclude them from the rewards of a future state: although their paradise is separate, and subordinate to that of the men: but if they unfortunately die unmarried, they die in a state of reprobation. They are reported to be tender and affectionate in their nature, but tyrannical confinement and seclusion, will frequently create bad propensities, and pervert the best dispositions. At Constantinople, intrigues are carried on to a scandalous extent, and the Jews and Jewesses, who, in every country, are ready to undertake any thing for money, appoint the places of assignation, watch the most commodious opportunity, carry messages, and assist in disguising the par-

tics. If, however, the husband is vigilant or active enough to catch his wife with her paramour, he seldom awaits the decision of a court of law, but instantly sacrifices the delinquents to his revenge. Nor does the government deign to take notice of these atrocious acts of barbarity. As in the feudal times with us, the punishment is left in the hands of the relations of the deceased, who, according to their disposition, seek redress by retaliation, or compound for the murder by enforcing the payment of a pecuniary fine.

I had almost forgotten to mention that on our return from the bazar, we were obliged to take off our coats, and to have them exposed, for a few hours, in the open air, to purify them from any infection which might have adhered to

them. At Smyrna, where they are much more apprehensive of the plague, under similar circumstances, we should at least have undergone the ceremony of fumigation. Although this disease rages and subsides at particular periods, it is seldom quite extinct at Constantinople*, which is another strong argument in favour of the necessity of a lazaretto.

The country seats belonging to the emperor are chiefly on the banks of the canal, at a small distance from the city; but are by no means splendid edifices. He has a kiosk, supported by marble pillars, which looks immediately on the

* The first plague that visited Constantinople happened during the reign of Justinian. It travelled westward from Pelusium, where it first broke out, over the whole continent of Europe, and raged for fifty-two years, in which time it nearly half depopulated that portion of the globe. See Procopius.

harbour, and, when he goes a pleasuring on the canal, he generally embarks from it. He is very fond of water expeditions, and often makes excursions in his barges, some of which are fitted up with sumptuous magnificence, and are rowed by an hundred men, who are amazingly expert in the management of their oars, and move together with the nicest exactness. At present he is building a state barge, which is nearly finished, and most richly and profusely ornamented with every article, either of convenience or splendour.

From the elegance of the boats and barges, one would expect to find some taste displayed in the construction of the ships of war; but they are so awkward in shape, and so overloaded with gilding, carving, and painting, that they have a very unwieldy and clumsy appearance.

Notwithstanding the strength and size of these vessels, the Turkish sailors are so inexpert, and so thoroughly unacquainted with naval tactics, that, in sea engagements with any of the other powers of Europe, they are uniformly beaten, if the force is in any shape on an equality, and not unfrequently, when it is greatly inferior. I dined a few days ago, in company with an English gentleman, who, during the late war with Russia, had served on board the Turkish fleet, and had been in an action. He gave me a miserable account of the Turks as seamen, and said, that they were destitute of every good quality, that they observed no discipline, and possessed neither courage, activity, nor skill.

The police of Constantinople, which is under the direction of the governor

or mayor, is, in many respects, extremely well regulated. The price of provisions is fixed according to the plenty or scarcity of the different commodities, and there are officers, in constant attendance, to examine the weights and measures, and to see that every purchaser receives his due. If they detect any one committing a fraud, he is delivered over to the magistrate of the parish, and bastinadoed or severely fined. Fraudulent bakers are nailed by the ear to the doors of their own shops, and convicted liars are burnt with an iron on the forehead; a wholesome regulation if it were always impartially administered, as a regard for truth is one of the firmest supports of society. The shops throughout the year, are opened at the rising, and shut at the setting of the sun, and a strong patrol parades

the streets every night, to take up disorderly people, and preserve the peace and security of the inhabitants.

Though there are many delightful spots near Constantinople, the country does not, on the whole, please me so much as the environs of Smyrna. Belgrade and Bujukderè are the two prettiest villages in the neighbourhood, and are the places where the Franks chiefly reside during the summer season. The former is situated in the middle of a beautiful wood, which is refreshed by several currents of limpid water, and is, in my opinion, much to be preferred: the latter commands a fine view of the canal, on whose borders it stands. In our way to Belgrade, we passed through some rich and extensive meadows, where the grand seignor's horses are kept at this time of

the year. They were very numerous, and each was fastened to the ground by a tether, round one of his hind and fore legs. A great many tents were pitched for the accommodation of those who had the care of them, and which, from being intermixed with such a crowd of horses, afforded us a novel and pleasing scene.

By deviating a little from the direct road, we saw an aqueduct, which was erected by Justinian, and which, although not comparable to that near Nîmes, is by no means a contemptible structure. A degeneracy of taste is, however, immediately perceived, which informs you that it is not a production of the Augustan age. It consists of two bridges, one built upon the other, and each supported by four noble arches, the effect of which is much diminished by several

very insignificant ones, that are crowded into the intermediate spaces. The cones, which are erected against the sides to strengthen them, are all reversed, and have a singular appearance. This aqueduct was raised to conduct water to the metropolis (where few springs are to be found) and it still serves for that purpose. We had not proceeded much farther, when we passed three Turkish aqueducts, which are solid but clumsy specimens of masonry. In the wood of Belgrade, there is an immense basin, which supplies them with water.

We dined at Mr. T——'s at Belgrade, where we spent a most agreeable day. In the evening we took a walk into the wood, which is an enchanting spot. It is of considerable extent, and is planted chiefly with birch, and fruit trees, which

form a thick shade, and a delightful retreat from the scorching rays of the summer and autumnal sun. The turf, which is of the brightest verdure, is refreshed by several noble sheets of limpid water, and the sky for months, is so tranquil and transparent that not a vapour is to be seen. The most refreshing breezes are wafted from the Black Sea, which moderate the heat of the atmosphere, and parties of Greeks frequently assemble in the evening, and pass a few hours in the cheering and rational amusements of music, dance, and song.

On our return home, we passed through Bujukderè, and entered Pera by night. The moschs, which, on account of the Ramazan, were all illuminated, made a very grand and brilliant appearance; but what most surprised me was

the astonishing number of dogs which we found lying in every part of the streets, and which, as it was rather late, I suppose had taken up their night's lodging. It was with the greatest difficulty that we could prevent our horses from treading on them, for they were so lazy, that the imminent danger which threatened them did not, in the least, rouse them from their lethargy. They are of a large breed, and are at times so savage, that it is dangerous to walk in the streets at night. On our journey from Smyrna, we had been very much annoyed by these animals. In the villages particularly, they swarmed to such a degree, and were so troublesome, that as soon as we came in sight of the houses, we generally deemed it advisable to descend from our horses, and fill our pockets with stones, which

we used as defensive weapons. One morning, I recollect, I was very much diverted with an incident that occurred, as we were entering one of these villages. A strange dog, with an abundance of strength in his limbs, and of fierceness in his countenance, made a most violent and unprovoked attack on a cur belonging to one of our guides, and which was by no means his match. This so enraged his master, that he, in an instant, sprang from his horse, and with his drawn sabre pursued the wretched animal for two or three hundred yards. The dog, however, had so much the advantage in point of fleetness, that the indignant Turk was at length obliged to abandon the pursuit, and to satisfy himself with the desire he had shewn of revenging the injury.

Constantinople, considering its populousness and situation, is not a place of very extensive commerce. Still a number of European merchants are established here, and some of them have acquired ample fortunes, and live in great splendour.

Their houses are substantially built, and fitted up with elegance and convenience.

The society is on a larger scale than that of Smyrna, but not so agreeable, on account of the tribe of foreign ministers, who distinguish themselves by a great deal of ridiculous parade, and insist on a degree of ceremony which destroys the freedom, and consequently the pleasure, of social engagements. They live at a great expence, keep sumptuous tables, and splendid equipages, and never stir out without guards and

a numerous train of attendants and servants. When they visit each other, they are punctiliously scrupulous, in observing the forms which have been established to distinguish their different degrees of rank and precedence, and according to the number of times a bell tolls, it announces an ambassador, an envoy, or a chargé des affaires. With the Turks, who are extremely fond of external show, it is perhaps proper that these ceremonies should be observed; but I think, in other respects, the greatest part of them is superfluous, and might very well be dropped.

It is but seldom you meet with a fireplace in the houses in Turkey, and the Franks have pretty generally adopted the Turkish fashion of heating their rooms. They make use of a contrivance called a *tendour*, which is nothing more than a

square table, large enough to accommodate eight or ten people. A pan of lighted charcoal is placed under it, and it is covered with a fine carpet, or some rich stuff, which, when pendant, is long enough to reach the ground, and consequently prevents a great portion of the heat from escaping. Those who are desirous of warming themselves, approach this table, and, lolling on a sofa, pull the covering over their shoulders, and exhibit no bad picture of Asiatic indolence. These machines are, however, attended with much danger, and are frequently the occasion of fire in the Turkish houses.

The day before yesterday we dined at Sir Robert Ainslie's*, and, in the even-

* This gentleman was then Ambassador at Constantinople from our Court.

ing, accompanied him to count Potoski's, the Polish ambassador's, where a grand festival was given, in honour of his sovereign's birth-day. The count and his suite were richly dressed in the habit of their country, and the principal room was decorated with wreaths of flowers, twined round mottos which were suitable to the occasion. All the foreign ministers and their ladies, and the best company of Constantinople were invited, and made

It is remarkable, that two-thirds of the salary of our Ambassador are paid by the Turkey Company, which is a very heavy tax on their funds. The regular annual disbursement is 2000 l. besides other adventitious expences, which are frequently considerable.—At the appointment of Mr. Liston, the late Ambassador, the outfits and presents amounted to upwards of 2200l.—The salary, however, is not adequate to the station, and debars our Ambassador from living on an equality with the other members of the diplomatic corps, and from maintaining that dignity which is suitable to his rank, as representative of the British empire.

altogether a numerous and elegant assemblage. There was a concert of instrumental music, after which the company sat down to a sumptuous supper, and after the supper there was a ball. This nobleman, who is nearly related to the king, in addition to his private fortune, which is very considerable, receives from the Porte, as Polish ambassador, five hundred piaſtres a day ; ſo that he can well afford to live in ſplendour.

In Conſtantinople, a Frank, unleſs he be the aggreſſor, is not often ſeriously injured, though the beſt ſecurity is a janizary, who is conſidered by the populace with a certain degree of reſpect, and is generally found a faithful and zealous ſervant. If, however, any abuſive language ſhould be uſed, it is prudent not to notice it ; for, if a quarrel enſue, which

ever party is in the wrong, the Turks will always support their countrymen. Since the last war, in which the Turks were thoroughly convinced of their own weakness and degeneracy, and of the superiority of their adversaries, both in deeds of prowess and skill, the Russians are more respected, or rather dreaded, than any other Christian nation.

It is an occupation, both curious and amusing, to observe the versatility of the public mind, to attend to its rapid changes, and to watch how it is successively roused to energy, or depressed to inaction, by the chequered events of war. But the Turks will, perhaps, never recover from their present panic. The severe chastisement which they received at the hands of their northern neighbours, has left an impression, possibly, as du-

nable as their name, as an independent state.

In Turkey, I observe, the Italian language prevails much more generally than the French, whether from its being acquired with greater facility, or from their long intercourse with many of the Italian states, I cannot pretend to say. The Armenians, Jews, and others, who act as brokers, and transact business, either for themselves or for the European merchants, established in different parts of the empire, all converse fluently in Italian, whereas but few of them are at all acquainted with French. As a matter of taste, I infinitely prefer the Italian language to the French. It is more energetic, it is more musical, and has such a copious range of words, that it is equally calculated for poetry or prose, for the

premeditated compositions of rhetoric, or the familiar effusions of conversation. It is a language, also, which well rewards the labour of cultivation, as it can boast of many of the best productions of the human mind, in modern times.

I cannot conclude this letter, without informing you of the kindness, and hospitality of Mr. T——, a British merchant settled here. When we delivered our letters to him, he insisted that we should remain at his house, and by his generous, polite, and affable behaviour, has so entirely removed all restraint, that we already begin to consider ourselves at home.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XVI.

Galatz, May 24, 1792.

IN my last, I neglected to mention Scutari, a considerable town on the Asian side of the canal, immediately opposite to Constantinople, and which many, though with no great propriety, consider as one of the suburbs of that city. It is delightfully situated, and stands at no great distance from the spot, where once flourished the ancient Chalcedon, a place stigmatized with the appellation of *blind*, on account of the stupidity of its founders the Megarians, in the choice of their situation.

Scutari is the only city which is at

present situated on the Asian banks of the Bosphorus. It is the ancient Chrysopolis, near which that desperate battle was fought between Constantine and Licinius *, which secured to the former the undivided possession of the Roman world, and terminated those obstinate struggles which had lasted for so many years, and depopulated the fairest portions of the globe. The government of this place is an office of high importance, and is intrusted to a pacha, who is appointed by the grand seignor. It carries on an extensive trade, and is the principal rendezvous of the merchants from Armenia and Persia.

* Licinius was made prisoner at Chrysopolis, and carried thence to Thessalonica, where he was beheaded.

On the 10th of May we left Constantinople, and that we might have a finer view of the canal, we went in a boat to Bujukderé.

This canal is the ancient Thracian Bosphorus, so famous in history, through which the waters of the Euxine incessantly flow into the sea of Marmara, and afterwards, continuing their course through the Hellespont, finally disembogue themselves into the Mediterranean.

Amongst the various currents of the Bosphorus, there is one which, on account of its singularity, merits particular notice. Beneath the stream which descends towards the sea of Marmara, there is, at a certain depth, a current which flows in a contrary direction, mounting from the point of the seraglio to the

castles. This fact is clearly ascertained by the fishermen, who, when they drop their nets, find them, for several fathoms below the surface, carried down the canal, from North to South; but, if they continue to let them sink, the lower part evidently curves the contrary way, and is borne against the upper current. This is a very ancient discovery, but no satisfactory reason, as to the cause, has hitherto been given*.

This celebrated strait, which separates the two continents of Europe and Asia, reckoning from the harbour of Constantinople to the Cyanean rocks, extends about sixteen miles in length; and its ordinary breadth does not exceed above a mile and a half. In one spot,

* See Tournefort, vol. ii. page 401.

indeed, the opposite shores approach within five hundred paces of each other, which occasions the water, with a northerly wind, to flow with wonderful rapidity. The *old* castles, which are planted with immense pieces of artillery, command this part of the canal, and here it was that Darius connected the two continents by a bridge of boats. These castles, whose walls are of an astonishing thickness, were originally erected by the Greek emperors, and were repaired and strengthened by Mahomet the second, preparatory to his siege of Constantinople. The *new* castles, which were built, by order of Mahomet the fourth, to check the incursions of the Muscovites and Cossack Tartars, secure the northern entrance of the strait. They stand on two opposite capes, one in Europe, the other in Asia,

and repose on the ruins of the two celebrated temples of Serapis and Jupiter Urius. The curvature of the canal is sometimes very considerable, and its banks, particularly on the European side, are lined, almost the whole way, with villages, fortresses, country seats, and chiosks. In some parts the coast is steep and rugged, full of projecting rocks and deep caverns, which present a wild and romantic appearance : in other parts every landscape is softened by the hand of art, and nothing is to be seen but verdant sloping meadows, rural cottages, and groves of fruit trees.

The most enchanting and interesting views are continually inviting the eye. The anchorage is excellent, and the water, which abounds in a variety of delicious fish, is deep, and clear as crystal.

Between Constantinople and Scutari, some ruins are seen which are known under the name of Leander's tower, and which are said to have been erected to the memory of the untimely fate of that adventurous youth. But those who thus named them, were probably unacquainted with the story, or had forgotten that it was across the Hellespont * Leander used to swim, when he paid his nocturnal visits to the beautiful Hero. It was, in fact, erected by the emperor Manuel, and is supposed to have corresponded with another tower, from which chains might be extended to the coasts, to block up, in cases of emergency, the passage of the canal. The distance between the opposite shores, in this part, does not exceed

* From Abydos to Sestos. See Ovid. Ep. 18 and 19.

five hundred paces, and it was here that Xerxes constructed his bridge of boats, for the passage of his immense but pusillanimous army.

Not being favoured by the wind, we were obliged to row the whole way, and above three hours had elapsed before we reached Bujukderé. This, however, was a detention which I did not at all regret, as it afforded me an opportunity of examining, at my leisure, this boasted spot, and of dwelling on those beautiful landscapes which successively presented themselves as we advanced.

We had been politely invited by Mr. A—— to remain at his house, till we embarked on board our Greek vessel, in which we were to accompany Mr. V——, a Dutch merchant, removing with his wife and family to Bucharest. We proposed to go by way of the Black

sea, and, mounting the Danube as far as Galatz, to proceed thence to Bucharest, by land. This appeared to be a more eligible plan, than encountering the danger and fatigue of travelling on horseback to Semlin; yet could I possibly have foreseen what time has disclosed, I am doubtful whether I should not have preferred the latter route.

Shortly after our arrival at Bujukderé, we waited on Mr. V—— to know when he had determined to embark. He replied, the moment the wind became favourable; but that there was little chance of its changing that night. After such an answer, we went to bed at our usual hour, with apparent security. About two o'clock in the morning, however, we were awakened out of a sound sleep, by a violent knocking at our chamber door,

and the vociferation of a person, with whose voice we were totally unacquainted. I had quite forgotten where I was, and could not conceive the reason of such an untimely disturbance. At last, I thought I heard the name of V——, which brought to my recollection all that had passed. We immediately jumped out of bed, and, hastily dressing ourselves, ran down stairs. We were in a great hurry and very impatient, but as fate would have it, the servants were searching above half an hour before they could find the key of the street door. We were nevertheless detained at V——'s a considerable time, and did not get under weigh till after five o'clock.

To guard the entrance of the Euxine, several fortresses are erected on either shore, which, if kept in proper repair, and well

supplied with men and ammunition, might set at defiance the attack of almost any force. On the Asian coast, a castle was pointed out to us, which was built after a plan of Baron de Tott.

It was at the northern mouth of the Bosphorus, on the European side, that Phinæus king of Thrace kept his court, and where he entertained, for several days, Jason and his Argonauts, who, after leaving the inhospitable shores of Bythia*, were obliged to apply to him for shelter from tempestuous weather and contrary winds. The ancients, who always dreaded the navigation of the Black sea, crowded the opposite shores, at the entrance, with votive temples to their

* The present Beiros is supposed to be the spot where formerly stood the capital of the kingdom of Amycus.

favourite divinities, that they might be induced to appease its fury. The moderns have acted much more wisely, in erecting two light-houses to point out to mariners the dangers of the Cyanean rocks. On one of these rocks there is a stone pillar, about fourteen feet high, which is known by the name of Pompey's pillar, and is said, though not with much probability, to have been erected by him, after his conquest of Mithridates.

The Euxine, or Black sea, is about two hundred leagues in circumference, and may be compared to an immense lake. It is the receptacle of several of the largest rivers in Europe; and as the canal of Constantinople, which is a very narrow strait, is the only visible outlet, many naturalists have been puzzled to account

for its stationary appearance, whilst others have been of opinion, that its superfluous waters are carried off by means of subterraneous channels. Although we did not find it correspond exactly with the description the ancients have given of it, yet making allowance for the apprehensions of the Argonauts, and the dissatisfaction of Ovid, we shall not be far removed from the truth. At least, whilst we were on it, it was extremely boisterous, and the sky was obscure, and the weather cold. Till lately it was entirely under the dominion of the grand seignor, and no vessel could navigate on it without his permission, which was very cautiously granted; but the possession of the Crimea by the northern empress, has deprived him of this exclusive right, and will

probably lead to more important consequences.

Till two in the afternoon, I had not felt any disagreeable effects from the motion of the vessel; and, as I had lately performed a long voyage, I was beginning to flatter myself that I should escape. Shortly after that hour, however, some unfavourable symptoms betrayed themselves, and in the course of forty minutes I was seized with a deadly sickness, which continued with increasing violence till three the next morning, when it fortunately began to abate. Never do I remember to have passed so wretched a night. The cabin being small, and V——'s family numerous, there was no birth for us in it, and we were therefore obliged to seek for shelter elsewhere. On inquiry, we

found that there was no choice, and the only place kept vacant for us was at the head of the vessel, where there was a hole, (scarcely a fit residence for a dog) one half of which was allotted as the temple of repose for my brother and myself. When lying, we were so cramped for room, that it was quite a labour to turn, and the roof was so low, we could not even sit upright. The only light and air we received were admitted through the opening by which we entered, and which was so small, that before sickness had worn us down, and practice rendered us expert, we ran the risk of sticking by the way. Our ingress and egress that night were perpetual. When I returned, I generally perceived my brother, with his head and shoulders out, inquiring with earnestness, if the weather

were mending, and telling me, with a mournful countenance, that he was preparing for another fally. These complicated misfortunes were not a little aggravated by the dreadful noise which the sailors unceasingly made with their voices and violins. I absolutely thought they would have driven me to distraction, and I often wished for a little English discipline to keep these fellows to their duty, for they were inconceivably lazy, and under no kind of subordination. We would willingly have remained all night on deck; but the sea (which in these parts is generally much agitated) was so tempestuous, that we should, in all probability, have been washed overboard; and the consolations of hope, you know, dispose us to consider life as worth preserving, even under the burden of the

deepest afflictions. Our situation would have furnished some laughable scenes to the pencil of Bunbury; but we were too much weakened, and too immediately concerned, to enjoy them ourselves.

Both the Turks and Greeks are miserable failors. They know very little about the management of the rigging and sails, and are so ignorant in other respects, that they are almost unacquainted with the use of the compass. A number of boats navigate on this sea with a sail and four oars; then it is only during the summer months, and they seldom venture out from the latter end of September till the beginning of May. Even then, they are so cautious, that they come to anchor every night, and are careful never to lose sight of the coast. Some of the first experiments in navigation were made on this

sea by the enterprising genius of a race of heroes, and the Turks seem to have added scarcely any thing to the nautical knowledge or skill of these intrepid adventurers.

On the 12th, early in the morning, we passed Varna, and often have I lamented since, that we did not disembark there. It is a considerable town, and one of the best ports in the Euxine, famous in history for the desperate battle fought there in 1444, between Amurat and Ladislaus king of Hungary, who lost the victory and his life. Ten thousand Christians were left on the field, and the slaughter of the Turks was so considerable, that the sultan confessed a similar victory would insure his ruin*.

On the 13th, at four o'clock in the morning, we were within two hours sail

* See Gibbon's Rom. Emp. vol. xii. p. 163.

of the principal mouth of the Danube, when the wind suddenly changing, and shortly after blowing from the opposite quarter, we were driven back to a bay called Cavarna, (a little above Varna) where we were obliged to anchor. The waters of this bay wash the coast of Bulgaria; and here it was that the Russians and Turks last year had an obstinate engagement, and whence the latter were, in the end, compelled to retreat, but without the loss of a single ship.

Tomis, the place so celebrated for the banishment of Ovid, was at no great distance from this spot, though there are various conjectures respecting its exact position. I could not help recalling to my mind the sufferings and complaints of the unfortunate bard, in which his elegant but unfirm and luxurious soul so

forcibly describes, the horrors of being exposed to a savage race of people, a barren coast, a boisterous sea, and a tempestuous climate, and in which he so pathetically laments the deprivation of the pleasures and vices of Rome.

As we had all suffered much from illness, and the captain was of opinion that the contrary wind would continue for several days, we determined, if any conveyance could be procured, to quit the vessel, and go to Galatz by land.

The captain told us, that there was a Turkish village about half a mile from the shore, to which V—— repaired the day after our arrival, not forgetting our firman*. On his return, he informed us, that he had secured several carts and

* This is a paper, corresponding to the passport of Christian countries.

oxen, which would be ready for us the next morning. This piece of intelligence was received with universal joy, and on the 18th we accordingly disembarked. I expressed a desire of taking the whole of our baggage with us; but was told that there was not room for our large trunk. I reluctantly left it behind, foreseeing, in a manner, the misfortunes to which in the sequel it gave rise.

Bulgaria formerly constituted a part of the kingdom of Hungary; but it was conquered by Amurat II. and has since then been annexed to the Turkish empire. The southern parts of it contain a few considerable towns, of which Sophia is the metropolis, and the residence of the beglerbeg, or viceroy of Romelia.

The accommodations for travelling in Bulgaria are beyond all description deplo-

nable, and the badness of the weather was no small addition to the catalogue of our distresses; for our vehicles were in such a crazy condition, and so open on every side, that, notwithstanding we wrapped ourselves up as warmly as possible, we were very little protected from its inclemencies.

These vehicles, called by the people of the country arabàs, were long narrow carts, without springs, and covered with mats, which were quite rotten and full of holes. In order to be as comfortable as we could, we used to lay one mattress under us, and cover our baggage (which we piled up behind us, so as to make a support for our backs) with the other. We then placed ourselves side by side, but were so stinted for room, that this position, although the most eligible, was a

very unpleasant one. Our driver was seated in the front of the cart between our legs, and was in one respect of great use ; for, being a lusty fellow, he blocked up a considerable gap, and excluded no contemptible portion of cold wind. He possessed, what is ironically called, a plentiful stock of modest assurance, and, whenever he felt himself cold, without any ceremony, would struggle hard to wriggle himself into the cart. Being, however, sufficiently squeezed without him, we never allowed him to succeed ; but not understanding his language, we were obliged, in our own defence, to have recourse to something still more authoritative and effectual, and to resist his encroachments with our feet.

Our oxen went at the rate of about three miles an hour ; and, as they were

not changed on the road, they could not travel above six or seven hours out of the four-and-twenty, so that we did not advance very expeditiously. Their owners were not at the trouble or expence of providing or purchasing any forage for them; but, when they were fatigued, would unyoke them, and turn them out to graze on whatever the country afforded.

Whilst we were on this road, we had a striking instance of the irascible and revengeful disposition of the Turks. Two of our guides had had a difference of opinion on some trivial subject. The debate soon grew warm, and in the course of a few minutes they drew their knives, and began a furious attack, which, in all probability, would have terminated in some fatal catastrophe to the parties, had we not been present. We had great trouble

in separating, and much more in pacifying them.

The villages we passed through were wretched in the extreme, and plainly demonstrated the effects of a corrupt and tyrannic government; for although our firman secured to us the best lodging, which each place furnished, we could never expect any thing half so comfortable as an English barn. More than once, we were all obliged to sleep in the same apartment, which was so small, that every inch of the ground was covered with our mattresses, and we could scarcely move, without making invasions on a neighbour's territories. There were several ladies with us, to whom a situation of this kind must have been extremely unpleasant and inconvenient; yet a room thus inhabited, displayed a scene so novel and

so droll, that the first time we were witnesses to it, we could not get to sleep for laughing.

Whenever we had the good fortune to meet with a fire-place, it was sure to be in the middle of the room, with a hole in the roof to let out the smoke; but which answered so badly the purpose for which it was contrived, that the moment our victuals (when we had any) were dressed, we extinguished the fire, preferring to suffer from cold to the risk of being stifled by the gross vapours which issued from half-dried wood.

We found the people of the country inhospitable savages, never yielding any assistance to us, but when it was compulsory. On our arrival they used to flock round us, and survey us with a mixture of terroure and surprize. Indeed they

are so accustomed to be plundered, that they are dreadfully fearful of strangers, and carefully conceal from them, even the necessaries of life. They possess, in general, a great deal of curiosity, are much addicted to low cunning; and, when lucre stimulates, and opportunity favours, will frequently proceed to open violence.

During the war, this unfortunate country was completely drained of its wealth by the pacha and other people in power, and the contributions which were levied on these miserable villages were altogether astonishing. One in particular, called Cajarmari, where there are only eight hovels, and where the majority of the inhabitants has only a coarse shirt to veil their nakedness, paid, annually, one thousand piaftres, a sum so far beyond

what they could support, that it wrested from them even the necessaries of life, and reduced them to a state of the most abject poverty and distress. Who can listen to a tale of such villany and persecution, without giving way to the emotions of indignation and horror? Let us not, therefore, attribute that savageness of character, which I have already remarked, to any natural defect of disposition, but rather to the unrelenting cruelty and oppression of their insolent rulers: for human nature, when harassed by continual aggravation, loses, by degrees, all its mildness and benevolence, and necessarily engenders the seeds of distrust and revenge. Though frequently crushed to submission, the innate love of liberty still exists, and the delusive persuasions of hope will, at intervals, rouse it

to activity. Anxious for redress, and panting, with eagerness, for emancipation, if an opportune moment arrive, whilst the transitory flame of irritated passions animates the breast, we are not to be surprised, if it endeavour to assert its rights, and to retaliate those injuries by which it has been aggrieved. A propensity to hate our enemies, and to avenge the wrongs they have inflicted on us, is a principle which has an eternal basis in nature, and prevails throughout the extent of the animal creation. It is a fundamental law which is universally established in the breast, and is neither to be extirpated by power, nor invalidated by persuasion, nor subverted by sophistry.

The country is remarkably level, and we traversed immense plains, so small a portion of which is cultivated, that the la-

bours of the plough are almost unknown. They consist chiefly of pasture land, and the little grain that is raised, is of such an indifferent quality, that it is hardly fit for use. These plains stretch, with little interruption, from the foot of Mount Hæmus, to the banks of the Danube, and were the theatre of several desperate conflicts between the enterprising and irresistible Attila and the degenerate soldiers of Theodosius*.

The climate is cold, and must be extremely unfavourable to vegetation, for scarcely a tree is any where to be seen; but the cattle, such as horses, cows, and sheep, though not abundant, is healthy and strong.

Yours, &c.

* See Gibbon's Rom. Emp. v. vi. p. 58.

LETTER XVII.

Galatz, May 26, 1792.

ON the 18th, at two o'clock, we reached a village on the banks of the Danube, which we, of course, concluded was very near Galatz. Shortly after our arrival, however, as we were congratulating ourselves on the termination of this irksome journey, one of our company, who had been chatting with the villagers for the sake of information, approached, and, with a disconsolate countenance, told us, that our guides had mistaken the road, and, instead of conducting us to the place which was opposite to Galatz, had carried us above forty leagues higher up the river.

This intelligence was enough to ruffle even the calm temper of a stoick. Had I been travelling through an interesting country, I should not perhaps have repined: but, when I considered, that I had been traversing some thousand acres of waste land; and that I had seen nothing but a few ruined villages, where desolation holds its dreary and solitary sway: when I reflected, moreover, on the loss of time, and on the fatigue I had undergone, I confess that I was thoroughly discontented. Here it was, we had ample reason to lament having left our trunk on board the Greek vessel: we might, otherwise, have crossed the Danube, and have proceeded to Bucharest in a direct line.

Raffovat (the name of this village) was formerly respectable on account of its ex-

tent; and the ruins of several hundred houses which surround it, made me lament its present insignificance. Destitute of every thing which can render life comfortable, it only offers to the view a few huts, corresponding with the manners of their tenants, which hardly rise above a state of nature. They all appear to be half-starved, and are subject to fevers and a variety of other complaints, occasioned by the badness and scantiness of their nourishment. Yet so great is the vanity of mankind, and so desirous, in every situation, is one person of distinguishing himself above another, that even in this obscure corner of the earth, where one would imagine, from the description, that extreme poverty had levelled all distinctions, and crushed the aspiring sentiments of emulation, children are seen, with their

caps loaded with pieces of money, whilst both themselves and their parents are suffering from the denial of food. Almost every scene of life is capable of furnishing instruction, and never was the folly of ostentation more forcibly conveyed to my mind.

After an infinite deal of trouble, by the authority of our firman, we at last obtained a lodging, which consisted of two adjoining rooms, heated by the same stove. It had not a very inviting appearance; yet we consoled ourselves with the expectation of a sound sleep, and the hopes of recruiting our strength by a short remission from the fatigues of travelling. But when the hour of repose came, we found that imagination had been much too fervent, and had been only amusing us with visionary ideas; for the rooms, which

were thatched with rushes, swarmed so astonishingly with fleas and muschetoes, that, during the two nights which I passed here, I had not so much as one hour's sleep.

Nothing but actual experience can enable us to form any just and definite notion of the misery to which mankind is often subjected; nor without the conviction, which this sage monitor uniformly enforces, could I have conceived, that we should one day be reduced to such a deplorable situation, as to lament the privation of our hole on board the Greek vessel, and to confess that there were abodes on earth, to which that dungeon was a luxury.

We had with us a fat German woman, whom we had hired at Constantinople to cook our victuals; but, God knows, she had but little occupation of

that kind. And, in truth, when we had an opportunity of purchasing any provisions, they were not much improved by the assistance of her art: for she was abominably dirty, and there being no kitchen to conceal her operations, we generally knew what we had to expect. But her greatest failing was a strong propensity to thieving; and when I came to inquire for my cloak, which I had committed for a day to her care, it was not to be found. My hat also disappeared about the same time, which was another irreparable misfortune, and severely felt.

The day after our arrival, we took a walk to see the environs of this unfortunate village, and, before we returned, entered into an agreement with the master of a Greek boat to carry us to Galatz; for, after the mortifying disap-

pointment we had met with, we felt no inclination to travel any farther by land.

The river Argis falls into the Danube almost opposite to Raffovat, and it was near this spot that the Gothic nation, flying from the furious pursuit of the Huns, implored the clemency of the Roman government. Valens, who at that time was, unfortunately, seated on the throne, after some hesitation, at last consented to receive them into the territories of Thrace. Near a million of these barbarians crossed the river, and laid the foundation of those rapid conquests which accelerated the subversion of the Eastern empire*.

The face of the country, to the west of Raffovat, is much more diversified and

* See Gibbon's Rom. Emp. vol. iv. p. 382.

interesting than that which we had passed through. In many parts, it is very wild and romantic, and, although but badly cultivated, wears the cheerful countenance of fertility, and abounds with agreeable landscapes. Some few flocks of sheep were grazing on the neighbouring mountains, which produce a fine wool, that is spun, and manufactured into a stout cloth, by the inhabitants, and proves a useful commodity in a country where the climate is cold, and which, having no opportunity of intercourse with other places, is entirely dependent on itself. The Danube adds considerably to the life and beauty of the surrounding scenery. It is very serpentine, and is decorated with several islands, which are well stocked with timber.

One would conceive that in such a

situation, where nature has not been very sparing of her bounties, where the soil is generous, where there is no want of fuel, and where the noblest river in Europe is at hand, that there could not be many found reasons of complaint. Yet the misery of the people is excessive. Systematic cruelty and oppression have so slackened every nerve of the body, and so cramped every energy of the mind, that they seem totally indifferent about life, and waste their time in the murmurs of idle complaint, or the listlessness of insurmountable inactivity. They used to assemble round our door, and to relate to us, in the expressive language of deep-felt grief, the hardships to which they had been exposed from the unrelenting cruelty and oppression of their rulers.

The manner in which the people of the country navigate their boats on this river is rather curious. In each boat there is seldom more than one man, who, instead of an oar, makes use of a piece of wood in the form of a battledore, with a long handle (something like the paddle of the Indians) which he shifts about with wonderful dexterity, employing it one moment as an oar, the next as a rudder. The river being wide, and the stream rapid, it was quite an entertainment to observe their different manoeuvres, when they wanted to gain the opposite shore. It was a task of no small difficulty; and in spite of all their skill and good management, before they could accomplish it, they were frequently carried out of a direct line a full quarter of a mile.

In the evening the governor, who is a

Constantinopolitan, and an obliging well-bred man, paid us a visit. He was wonderfully communicative for a Turk, and in the course of conversation let us into a great part of his history. He informed us that besides this, eleven other villages were subject to his authority, and that his principal view in residing here, was to induce those inhabitants, whom the horrors of war and the rapacity of his predecessor had driven away, to return, and rebuild their houses ; for, in its present desolated state, it yields him scarcely any revenue whatever. I have often been surprised at that destructive spirit of domineering over our inferiors, which, if we may judge from the almost continual abuse of power, seems to be a principle implanted in the human breast. Yet it certainly leads us strangely astray from the real and honour-

able pursuits and objects of our happiness. Tyranny may riot in its spoils for a short time, but it must terminate in ruin; whereas a mild and lenient government, like a temperate climate, produces a regular and increasing supply, always adequate to existing circumstances.

On the 20th, to my great joy, we embarked on board our boat for Galatz, which, had the wind favoured us, we might easily have reached the next morning by day-break. But, as usual, it was directly contrary; and although we were assisted a good deal by the current, before we had proceeded far, it became so violent, that the sailors could no longer manage the boat with their oars. We were therefore obliged to come to anchor. What followed was in exact unison with this ominous outset, and in this manner

we were frustrated by fortune for two tedious days; quitting our anchorage as the wind abated, and having recourse to it again as it increased. These frequent, and, apparently, increasing difficulties, so unnerved every active principle of enjoyment, that we had scarcely power left to admire the diversified landscapes, which opened upon us as we descended the river, and which were certainly capable of raising, in the mind of any less dissatisfied spectator, the most pleasurable ideas. Water, land, and wood, blended together, with all the charms of nature and graces of variety, and viewed through the numerous changes of light and shade which the two great luminaries of the earth were alternately affording, were no common objects; but we were so discontented that we could relish nothing. When our men were tired with

rowing, we used to go ashore, and wander in the woods, collecting wild flowers; or sit down among the rushes, and endeavour, by conversation, to mitigate the poignancy of present affliction, and banish the remembrance of past disappointment. We had advanced so little, that we began to apprehend we should be at least a week on the Danube, when, on the 22d in the morning, the storm ceasing, we took advantage of a dead calm, and, by dint of hard rowing, at six o'clock in the evening arrived at Ibrail.

This day was not only propitious to us, but to the whole Turkish empire, for it was the last day of the ramazan, and shortly after we landed, a great many guns were fired, and other demonstrations of joy took place.

As the termination of the ramazan

approaches, the Turks, if the sky is clear, ascend to the tops of the highest hills, and the instant they discover the new moon, make the air ring with acclamations.

The bairam, which is the Turkish Easter, commences the moment the ramazan ends. It lasts for three days, during which the Turks totally dispossess themselves of their usual gravity, and willingly engage in every kind of amusement and dissipation. The streets, and bazars, and coffee-houses, are crowded; bonfires are blazing; cymbals, trumpets, and drums are continually founding; and nothing but sport, and mirth, and jollity, is to be seen. Even many of the women, who have been closely imprisoned the rest of the year, are allowed to quit their apartments, and to partake of the general

joy. The first day of this festival is a day of universal pardon and reconciliation, and the Turks go to each others houses, making presents, and wishing prosperity. Friends form stricter alliances, and even enemies shake hands with cordiality; for every good Mussulman is bound at this season to forgive past offences, and to dislodge from his breast all uncharitableness. At Constantinople the grand seignor holds a splendid court, where, seated on his throne, he receives the compliments of the great officers of state, after which he gives a sumptuous entertainment in the hall of the divan.

Our sailors, anxious to participate in the pleasures of this holiday, and to celebrate it on shore, apprized us of their intention of leaving the boat early in the morning. We endeavoured, with all our rhetoric,

to dissuade them from deserting us, but our arguments were vain, for they were pre-determined to go.

Besides this festival, there is another called the little bairam, which falls seventy days later; and the Turks also, on the twelfth day of their third month, celebrate the birth of their prophet.

Ibrail is a place of some consequence. It is large, well built, and pleasantly situated, and the castle, which stands on an eminence, is commanded by a pacha of three tails, a title of high distinction in Turkey. Lances, on the points of which are fixed horses tails, are carried before the pachas, a custom which arose from the following occurrence. A Turkish general, who had lost all his standards, and whose troops were giving way on every side, suddenly ran up to a horse,

and, cutting off his tail, fastened it to the end of a lance, and elevated it in the air, which had such an effect on his soldiers, that they instantly rallied, and fought with such determined valour, that they soon retrieved their misfortune, and gained the victory*.

As we purposed remaining here all night, I was desirous of walking up and down the beach till the dawn of day; but being informed that it would be dangerous, as there was a number of villains generally lurking about, I was prevailed on, when it grew dark, to return on board. Sooner, however, than undergo what I had endured the preceding nights from confinement, heat, muschetoes, and fleas, I laid myself down on that part of

* See Tournefort, v. ii. p. 294.

the boat which, in the day-time, was occupied by the rowers, with nothing but some uneven planks for my bed, and the heavens for my covering. This was not, you will say, a very enviable place of rest, yet, comparatively speaking, it had its advantages, and when contrasted with the post I had abandoned, was even capable of furnishing some comforts.

That you may form a just idea of our sufferings the two preceding days, I will describe that part of the boat which was allotted to passengers. It was about twelve feet long and six wide, and was covered with an awning to keep out the rain. In this confined space, seventeen people extended on mattresses, were destined to remain, night and day, in the same position. A slave captain, who

had been torturing his mind half his life, to contrive the most convenient and economical plan of packing negroes, could not, I suppose, have squeezed us into a smaller compass; and our situation suggested to me, more than once, the hard fate of those unhappy people. At night, when, to exclude the damp air, it was closed at each end, it was just like a furnace, and we were absolutely almost suffocated with each other's breath.

Our sailors returned much earlier than we expected them; and on the 23d, about ten o'clock in the morning, we anchored at Galatz, joyful beyond measure, as you may easily imagine, to be released from our dreadful state of duurance, and fully resolved, that nothing

but absolute necessity should prevail on us again to trust to the uncertainty of a water expedition.

Yours, &c.



LETTER XVIII.

Galatz, June 4, 1792.

FROM the time we had quitted our vessel at Cavarna till our arrival here, we had fared so scantily (sometimes tasting nothing, in the course of the day, but a cup of coffee, without sugar, and a slice of black bread, as hard and heavy as lead) that we were almost famished. The moment, therefore, that we alighted from our boat, listening to the admonitions of Nature, we went in quest of provisions, and had not walked far, before we espied a baker's shop. With joy painted on our countenances, we immediately flew thither, and, purchasing

some rolls, rubbed over with oil to give them a polish, made a most delicious repast. I really never remember relishing any thing so much, which verified the old adage, that "Hunger is the best sauce."

Having satisfied our stomachs, our next inquiry was after our Greek vessel, which, as we had been so many days coming from Cavarna, we were in hopes had got the start of us; but, to our great sorrow and mortification, there were no tidings of her. This business being also dispatched, we went in search of a house, and, in this respect, we were much more fortunate, for we met with one, which far surpassed our most sanguine expectations. It had been inhabited by the Russian general, and also by the celebrated prince Potemkin, who remained

here a week. The walls had been lately white-washed, and it was divided into several apartments, in each of which, early in the evening, we spread three or four mattresses, laid our sheets, and, after having passed twelve nights in our clothes, again undressed ourselves. This, for the first night, was such an indulgence, and so increased our inclination to sleep, that we even set at defiance the depredations of the muschetoës, which, however, has not been the case since. You can scarcely conceive how these little animals torture us; for they pounce upon us in such swarms, that we kill them in vain; and all our exertions are unequal to the task of apparently diminishing their numbers. They absolutely deprive me of half the pleasures of my existence, and often make me think, what insignificant beings we

must ourselves be, when our comforts are so dependent, as to lie at the mercy of a diminutive insect.

Galatz is the last place of consequence on the southern side of Moldavia, and, like most of the other towns in the prince's territories, has been desolated by the iron hand of war. It was surrendered to the Russians about two years ago, after an obstinate battle, in which the greatest part of the Turkish army (consisting of eight thousand men, sent by the Porte to insure a successful resistance) was left dead on the field.

When the Russians entered the town, flushed with victory, and exasperated at the stubborn and unexpected opposition that had been made, they committed cruelties, which would reflect disgrace on any nation, or on any age. Instead of testifying

that respect to which a vanquished enemy is entitled, after having nobly fought in defence of their liberties and their country; instead of rewarding those deeds of valour and patriotism, which, whatever may be the fortune of war, always kindle, in the bosom of a true soldier, the generous sentiments of compassion and esteem; the licentiousness of the troops was suffered to rage without constraint. The four corners of the town were fired; the women were torn from the protection of their fathers and husbands; many of the inhabitants were wantonly massacred; the churches were broken open, plundered, and otherwise profaned (some of them being turned into butcher's shops): in short, every outrage, both on decency and humanity, was committed, and a scene was exhibited too black for

any pen to paint. How shocking is war when it is thus prosecuted! If it be a necessary evil, let it at least be deplored as a dreadful alternative; let it be waged with some sense of honour, and some principle of feeling; and let not the character of man be degraded by a barbarous delight in crimes, which should be estranged from his heart.

Shortly after our arrival, a Greek accosted us, and politely offered us his services, which we readily accepted. He has since constantly attended us, and, being of a very loquacious disposition, he soon acquainted us with every anecdote and occurrence of his life. During the war he had deserted his country, and fought, with various success, under the Russian banners. He took great delight in boasting of his achievements; in

showing the scars which he had received; and enumerating the perils from which he had escaped. Often have I wondered, that his injured countrymen, who sometimes listened to his recital, did not rise against him, and put a period to his insolence and his baseness, by planting their daggers in his heart. It would not have been a dishonourable offering at the altar of injured and insulted patriotism. Though in a manner an uninterested auditor, I never could bear to hear him expatiate on this subject. He completely exhausted my patience, and irritated my feelings; for I cannot help detesting the wretch, who rejoices in the misfortunes of his native land, and is designedly instrumental in accelerating its ruin. It is the most execrable and unnatural of all crimes, and betrays such a total depravity of heart,

such an entire deficiency of honour, generosity, and sentiment, that no punishment which this world can inflict can be adequate to such atrocious guilt.

This renegado, since the cessation of hostilities, has established himself here as an apothecary, and I fancy his stock of knowledge in the art is about equal to his stock of medicines, both very scanty. He amused us, for the first few days, with the relation of several laughable stories; but his fund of wit and anecdote was soon exhausted (which, by the by, is generally the case with story-tellers), and we now find his company extremely dull and tedious. He is, however, of a gay and active disposition, and appears to be desirous of diverting us as much as he can, and so far he is certainly entitled to our thanks.

When he perceived that his conversation no longer engaged our attention, he collected a band of fiddlers and dancers, whom he has frequently brought to our house: but I feel so little interested in this pastime, that, after their first exhibition, I have almost always quitted the room. Their favourite dance is this. About a dozen men and women, placed alternately, form a circle, which, as long as the dance lasts, is never broken. They display a variety of antic gestures, and, at stated periods, stretch out their arms over their heads, footing at the same time very clumsily, and making a terrible noise with their heels.

Among the musicians, there is a blind old man, who plays on an instrument, which, I imagine, is of his own invention, for I never saw one like

it*. Though not a very finished performer, he is considered as the Orpheus of the place, and every body pays him great respect, and listens to him with the profoundest attention.

Many of the women here form matrimonial alliances at a very early period of life, and there were one morning in our house two married ladies, whose ages together did not amount to four-and-twenty years. I scarce know which is most deserving of commiseration, the husband or the wife, for it is not possible that much happiness can result from these premature connexions, when reason is still in its infancy, and in all its operations is undecided and weak. And what signify the graces of personal charms, without corresponding en-

* It resembled a guitar more than any thing else to which I can compare it.

dowments of mind, the only qualifications which can secure permanent attachment and real esteem?

A few days ago, I visited the spot where the engagement between the Russians and Turks was fought, and where so many thousands of my fellow-creatures breathed their last. It is an extensive plain, bounded on one side by a hill, from the brow of which there is an interesting view that extends, across the Danube, over a large tract of country in Bessarabia, which, from its appearance, is tolerably fertile. It is inhabited by the Bujac Tartars, many of whom, like the other wandering tribes, live in villages, the houses of which are constructed on wheels, and which, as soon as the forage of any district is consumed, they transport to fresh pastures. It contains, however,

several fixed towns, such as Bender and Belgorod, which are tolerably well peopled.

A field of battle is always a melancholy sight. It immediately inclines the mind to a contemplative mood, and furnishes it with a train of gloomy ideas. We cannot survey it, without wondering at that strange perversion of human intellect, or that irresistible impulse of human passion, which, when a dispute arises, prompts us to spurn at accommodation, and to assert our claim by arms; which hurries us into the ocean of anarchy, disorder, and guilt; and diffuses over the face of the earth desolation, famine, and death. This spot was peculiarly calculated to excite similar emotions, for the effects of the slaughter were still apparent, and a number of skulls and bones was

scattered over different parts, deprived of their funeral rites, and exhibiting an awful memorial of the carnage of the day. What, alas ! is the history of mankind—little more than a dismal recital of battles and murders, of injustice and rapacity, of follies and crimes !

When we first arrived, the Russians were still in possession of Galatz ; but, by the articles of peace, it was ceded to the Turks on the 28th of last month. The inhabitants are just beginning to recover from their panic, and to rebuild their houses, the materials of which are wood and plaster.

One district of the town is inhabited by Jews, who carry on a confined commerce, and who, as in other parts, when you want to buy any thing, ask fully the double of what they can afford, and are

willing, to take. What a horrid consideration, that dishonesty should be the most prominent feature in the character of such a numerous and widely diffused people ! They meet, however, with their reward, for in every country they are shunned and despised. They are, besides, not unfrequently, the greatest sufferers, for, when we deal with them, we always go cautiously to work, and, expecting to be overreached, even when they reduce their demands to a fair standard, we still suspect they are endeavouring to impose on us, and take our leave without parting with our money. Industry, with a good character, will generally, I am convinced, in the end, insure better success than any acts to which the ingenuity of deception can resort. I was surprised to find, in their shops, several pieces of

English shalloons, which are brought all the way from Constantinople, and retailed at an enormous profit.

The provisions which the country affords, though in no great variety, are abundant and cheap. Some fish is also caught in the river, of which we partake every day, but of what species I cannot inform you. All I can say, is, that what it wants in flavour, it makes up in size, for it is both large and fat. In London it would not perhaps be regarded as a delicacy; but we have been so accustomed to bad fare, that we are not difficult to please.

On the 1st we took a walk to see an extensive lake, a few miles off, which has a communication with the Danube, and the fishery of which is farmed for seven hundred piaftres a year*. Near it, we

* I bathed in this lake, and was surpris'd at its

discovered a spring of most delicious water, which issued from a rock. We collected some of it in our hats, and relished it exceedingly; for that which we get at Galatz, as well as the wine (which is a distillation from wormwood), is excessively bad. On our return, being rather fatigued, we determined to explore a new road, by which we hoped to save a couple of miles; but we had not gone above half way, when we found ourselves at the entrance of an extensive morass, on the borders of the river, which was so thickly overgrown with high reeds, that we in vain attempted to penetrate them. After exhausting our strength in fruitless exertions, we were glad to find our way back, and regain the original road,

shallowness. I walked in nearly half a mile, and could not find any where above three feet of water.

for had we persisted much longer, we should, in all probability, have passed the night in the open air.

Our Greek vessel, which we had been so long anxiously looking for, only arrived the day before yesterday. It had been detained at Cavarna, by the contrary wind, a week after we quitted it, and had required the remainder of the time to ascend the Danube; so that, all circumstances considered, we should have been worse off, had we remained on board.

We dined that day, according to appointment, with the new governor, who, as far as I can judge, is as little adapted for the office as Sancho was. Still, had he possessed Sancho's humour, we should have been satisfied with him, for he would then have amused us with his conversation; but he is as dull an animal

as I ever met with, and scarcely opened his lips. His only recommendation is a plentiful stock of *good-nature*, a quality, which, unless united with *good-sense*, has but few attractions, and can insure a man, at most, but negative praise; because it then possesses no powers of discrimination, but entirely arising from want of observation and discernment, receives, with the same indifference, the most contrary impressions. Almost every thing was brought to table which the country and season afford: we ought not therefore to complain of the badness of the entertainment; but, what is unpardonable, the linen was so dirty, that I could not make use of my napkin—Such are the notions which the Greeks have of cleanliness and propriety! Many dishes, the materials of which I could not disco-

ver, were served up, and, when removed, were replaced by others as undefinable. Every thing, indeed, had such a filthy, slovenly appearance, that, notwithstanding the profusion of viands, and the stimulations of hunger, I lost my appetite without eating. The governor's sons, out of compliment, waited on us, and, during the time of dinner, some musicians were stationed behind us, who were miserable bawlers and scrapers, and had no mercy on our ears.

The Greeks, like the Turks, at meals, do not ordinarily provide themselves or their guests with knives and forks, but, when they help any body, they tear off a piece with their fingers. In the course of the dinner, I had the mortification of seeing several fowls undergo this barbarous operation. A basin

and ewer are, indeed, always sent round before dinner, when every person washes his hands, a necessary ceremony where they are employed in such purposes. At the houses of people of consequence, you are presented with richly embroidered towels to dry yourself.

In the suit of the Greek governor, there is a person who is appointed to superintend the education of his children, and who, however well calculated he may be for such an office, from the extent of his erudition, as a man of morality, he is certainly very deficient. This fellow is extremely fond of cards, and as we frequently play, for want of a better amusement to beguile the heaviness of time, when we first arrived, he generally managed to be of the party. But we have detected him in the act of cheating

so often, that we now decline the favour of his company. It was, to be sure, at a round game, at which, even amongst many individuals in England, I am sorry to say, these deceptions are professed to be considered as innocent amusements. For my part, I never regarded them in that venial light; and I conceive it to be a highly pernicious and derogatory principle, for any one, who has a proper regard for honour, or respect for himself, to lay down that as a rule of conduct, by which he is benefited, and another person injured. It may, perhaps, be alleged, that the benefit and the injury are of so trifling a nature, and are felt in such a slight degree by either party, that it is a matter of mere indifference, which is the sufferer. But if the temptation be small, the excuse is less pardonable, as little exertion

is requisite to subdue it. Yet, why should we endeavour to silence the murmurs of conscience by flying to the subterfuges of sophistry, and allow ourselves to palliate the motive, because the mischief is not severe: for even in trifles, I dislike to see people depart from those sound and laudable precepts, which, in points of greater moment, would insure everlasting infamy and contempt. These foolish distinctions certainly tend to vitiate the mind, and to estrange it from those rules of decorum and integrity which are the absolute maintenance of society. So far, therefore, from giving them encouragement, we ought constantly and vigilantly to guard against their attacks; and to recollect, that when once the barriers of honesty and morality are deprived of those watchful sentinels, which the up-

right conscience places over them as a protection, they are, from that moment, in danger of a surprise, and may be altogether subverted and destroyed. It is not by any sudden and impetuous shocks, that a mind, naturally well disposed, is corrupted; but by those insensible and deceitful operations of vice, which wear the mask of innocence, and gradually insinuate themselves into favour; which neither create alarm, nor awaken suspicion, till they have made a fatal progress in our affections, till they have sapped the very foundation of virtue, and contaminated every motive of action and thought. The documents of morality are, however, sufficiently clear, and it requires no great extent of capacity to prove, or to comprehend, that an act of deception is an act of dishonesty. Those, therefore, whose

sentiments of honour are so undefined and relaxed, as to allow them, without repugnance, to cheat at cards, must be of a mean and sordid disposition; and if they are restrained from the commission of crimes of a greater magnitude and a blacker die, it can only be from the dread of chastisement or retaliation.

This day has been employed in making preparations for our departure, which I ardently hope will take place to-morrow; for Galatz has nothing to recommend it, neither the beauty of the country, nor the manners of its inhabitants. They are all Greeks, and, considering the short interval which has elapsed since their misfortunes, the life which they lead is singular. Their chief occupation is singing, dancing, fiddling, and drinking. Even those who keep shops are so ad-

dicted to idleness, that they shut them up at an early hour, and are frequently absent in the middle of the day. The Greeks are carried away by an attachment to dissipation and pleasure, which no misfortunes can stifle or controul. They *will* pursue them in spite of every obstacle. The fascinating enjoyments of love or wine, or the more trivial amusements of dance or song, can, whilst they last, erase from the tablets of recollection, the galling chains of power, or the vexatious tyranny of avarice.

Moldavia is, on the whole, a fertile country, diversified with hill and valley, and well watered with rivers. It produces grain and wine, and an abundance of honey and wax. It once formed a part of the splendid empire of the Chagans, and, in later days, has experienced

many violent revolutions, having been overrun several times, in the course of the two last centuries, by the Poles and Russians. At present, it is governed by a prince, who purchases his appointment of the grand seignor, at an exorbitant price, which, however, does not secure him the enjoyment of it; for he is generally deposed before the expiration of many years, to make way for a new bidder. The inhabitants are Christians, and acknowledge the Greek patriarch; and have the honour of ranking the illustrious prince Cantemir, the Turkish historian, among their countrymen. It is still well peopled, and contains some considerable cities, of which Yaffi is the foremost in rank.

We did not forget the 4th of June after dinner, but drank the king's health,

in a bumper of the best wine that we could procure. It was not, to be sure, very capital in itself; but the toast imparted to it a flavour which enhanced its value. Englishmen, whilst at home, are so familiarized with the blessings of a good king and a free constitution, that they often appear to be almost indifferent about their possession; but when they are in foreign parts, where circumstances are continually arising which lead them into investigation, and dispose them to draw comparisons between the advantages which they enjoy and those which obtain in other countries, they feel a new train of ideas enlighten the mind, and a new train of emotions warm the heart; and when any particular day arrives which places these various sensations in a full point of view, and calls them into the

plenitude of action, they are as much surprised at their past apathy as they are delighted with their present sensibility. One of the great advantages, indeed, which accrues to Englishmen from travelling is, that, if they have any observation whatever, they are always forcibly impressed with the superiority of their own government, and always return to their native land with an additional partiality and veneration for those laws, which secure to them the invaluable treasure of liberty, and invest them with privileges which no other modern people has had the spirit and perseverance to contend for, or the good fortune to acquire.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XIX.

Bucharest, June 14, 1792.

It was necessary to make so many preparations for our journey from Galatz, that we did not get away till late on the 5th.

Our waggons formed a very respectable caravan. They were twelve in number, and were drawn by ninety horses*. We had twenty postillions to conduct them, and one of the prince of Moldavia's officers, who had been sent to us on application, attended us as far as Fokshan,

* Mr. V—— transported a considerable quantity of merchandise from Galatz to Bucharest, which was the reason of our having occasion for so many waggons and horses.

where we arrived on the 7th in the evening.

Notwithstanding we had with us such a numerous train of men and horses, our travelling expences through this country were very trifling. Between Smyrna and Constantinople, on the contrary, we found every thing excessively dear, which, however, may be easily accounted for, from the number of European travellers who frequent that road, and who have introduced those charges which the accommodations and the high price of provisions in their own countries render necessary.

This route was considerably out of our way; but V——, whose hopes were always fervent, had imagined that the prince would defray his expences, and, on that account, had insisted on this irrational plan. He found, however, when

an explanation took place, that he had been mistaking in his calculation, and I was a good deal gratified, when I heard of his disappointment. It was a just punishment for his obstinacy and credulity, which were a continual source of vexation, inconvenience, and delay, to the whole party.

The road, leading from Galatz to Fokshan, is, on the whole, tolerably good; but the villages we passed through are miserable in the extreme, and have all suffered, more or less, from the inhumanity of the Russian troops. The inhabitants are wretchedly clothed, and the only provisions with which they could supply us, were bad bread and a few eggs: even these we could not procure in abundance.

We found the climate cold and in-

constant, the weather generally changing two or three times a day. The face of the country, in most parts, resembles that of Bulgaria, being very level, badly cultivated, and consisting chiefly of pasture land.

On the 7th, in the morning, we crossed the Serret, and stopped to dine at a village called Surai, which, though composed of but a few huts, possesses a situation that does credit to the taste of its founder. Near it there is a delightful little wood, refreshed by several limpid streams, and abounding with beautiful shrubs. It also produces a great variety of wild flowers, some of which I collected, and will shew them to you on my return. I think you will admire them as much as many of the plants in our hot-houses, which are reared with so

much care, and cultivated at so great an expence.

Fokshan is a large borough, and is remarkable for standing in the two principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. A rivulet, which runs nearly through its centre, forms the boundary of these two provinces, whose princes regard each other with mutual jealousy, and exact the most rigid observation of their respective prerogatives. As an instance of this: If a man in one district commit any crime whatever, and, by passing the rivulet, can effect his escape into the other, before the magistrates can secure him, his person is inviolable. This, it must be owned, is a most ridiculous and impolitic custom, the more especially as the two provinces, though not under the same government, appertain to the same

empire. Even if they were not united by any such close connexion, the observance of a privilege so immoral in its tendency, and so mischievous in its consequence, would be still liable to much reprobation. It might, in some measure, be extenuated; but it could not be justified: for no country should hold out an encouragement to vice, by affording it protection; but, on the contrary, should exert its utmost power and influence in bringing to justice that offender, who has violated his duty as a citizen, and grievously transgressed those fundamental laws of society which it is evidently the interest of every community vigilantly and strictly to maintain.

Fokshan is also an interesting spot, on account of a dreadful battle which was fought under its walls last September,

between the Germans and Russians on one side, and the Turks on the other. The Turkish army had been sent by the Porte to defend the place, and consisted of eighty thousand men, who were totally routed by the united forces of the enemy, whose numbers amounted to little more than a third of their opponents.

When we recollect the undaunted valour displayed by the Turks on many former occasions, it certainly, at first view, appears surprising, that they should be overpowered, with such an enormous proportion of bodily strength in their favour. The page of history records sufficient examples wherein, even with an inferior force, they fought and conquered. And perhaps the same valour, which then insured them success, still exists; but it is not exerted with the same advantage:

for, whilst the other nations of Europe have been making progressive and continual improvements in tactics, the Turks, blinded by insurmountable prejudices, have wilfully despised these advancements, and have continued to rely almost solely on their natural resources. But experience sufficiently informs us, that Nature may almost always be assisted and forwarded by the efforts of art; and perhaps in no instance is she so dependent, as in the contingent events of war. The operations of a skilful general will, frequently, more than counterbalance the disparity of numbers. Ever on the watch, he observes every movement, and foresees every plan, of his adversary, and what the sinews of his strength cannot resist, his judgment will counteract, or his ingenuity evade.

The first onset of the Turks few troops can withstand; but that violent effervescence of spirit is soon exhausted; the havoc of the enemy's artillery is felt; and they often retreat as suddenly, and with as much precipitance, as they engage. When this once happens, the day is lost; for conceiving then, that their defeat has been pre-ordained by fate, the phantoms of imaginary danger appal them; confusion and despair spread rapidly through the ranks; the voice of exhortation is unheeded; and no effort can induce them to rally. I have often heard it remarked, that military men should be predestinarians: a maxim whose soundness I totally discredit, for although, under some circumstances, it may be productive of good effects, they are more than balanced by the disadvantages which it may occasion under others.

I neglected to mention, in its proper place, a circumstance which occurred on our journey to Raffovat, and which diverted us exceedingly. One day, whilst our oxen were grazing, a wrestling match took place between two of our guides. It was no sooner proposed, than our heroes sprang from the turf on which they were reposing, and consented to display their strength and agility. In a minute they were stripped, and the contest began; and, as they possessed nearly the same powers, it was a very keen one. Both the champions seemed to exert themselves with all their might, and to dispute the prize of honour with exalted notions of its value. They were, however, so well matched, both in point of alertness and nerve, that notwithstand-

ing the convenient hold which was furnished by the immensity of their breeches (for, in spite of the fashionable phrase, it would certainly be a perversion of terms to call them *small clothes*), a long and obstinate contest ensued, before one of the opponents was overset. The fortune of the day was then decided, and, parting friends, they reassumed their gravity, returned to their respective occupations, our oxen were again yoked, and we proceeded on our journey.

Fokshan, for Turkey, is a neat town, and the country, which surrounds it, is diversified and fertile. On the Walachian side, which is in a high state of cultivation, there is a mountain, at the distance of about four leagues, on which such a prodigious quantity of wine is grown, that:

although it is sold at the low rate of two paras * the oke †, and the prince claims but ten per cent. on the gross amount, it yields him an annual income of one hundred thousand piaftres. This luxuriant spot also furnishes an abundance of excellent timber, which is an article of extensive traffic. It is carried in boats to Galatz, and thence in larger vessels to Constantinople, where it is bought up for the purpose of making masts. The Russians are the principal purchasers and consumers of the wine.

On the 9th, in the morning, a pacha of three tails, who had been long expected, passed through this town. He

* A para is a little more than a halfpenny, twenty of them making a shilling.

† An oke is $2\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Both wine and oil pay duty by the weight.

entered it with great pomp, attended by a gorgeous train of six hundred horsemen, with colours flying, and music playing, amidst the silent and solemn admiration of the trembling inhabitants. His band of martial music was composed of drummers and fifers, and a few players on the cymbal, whose chief merit consisted in making a great noise; for they were neither expert performers, nor were the airs, with which they indulged us, distinguished for any thing but their insipidity. The carriages, which contained his women, were closely covered, and supported by mules, to which they were fastened by the means of long poles. He himself was seated in a clumsy coach, and had all that marked contempt and self-sufficiency in his countenance, which a consciousness of authority, added to a want of merit,

generally imprints ; but it is the fortune of rank to receive the tribute of outward respect from the bulk of mankind, and flattery adheres as naturally to power as envy to merit. To compliment him, the Christian standards were displayed, and a great crowd of people was collected to do him homage. He had been three weeks on the road from Bucharest, diffusing horror, and exciting concealed detestation, wherever he passed.

The pachas, on their march, frequently lay waste a whole province. They commit acts of the most shameful plunder ; levy heavy contributions ; and seize on provisions for their own use, without ever thinking of offering the most trifling compensation. So entirely is the people at their disposal, that they have nothing to do but to tremble and submit,

and are thankful to escape with their lives. These petty tyrants are invested with an uncontrouled power of life and death, which they never allow to sleep; but exercising it according to the fluctuations of their interest, they alternately render it the instrument of misery and destruction. Unacquainted with the dictates of mercy and benevolence, no appeal to humanity is listened to; but prerogatives, which, if unabused, and impartially administered, might extend the blessings of prosperity and peace, are made subservient to the most brutal passions, and are, by the total dismissal of mildness and justice, converted into the scourges of the human race.

Yet what can be the enjoyments of the most absolute despot? He may, it is true, inspire fear; he may enforce sub-

mission; he may desolate a country, and satiate his cruelty or his revenge by the distresses of its inhabitants; he may plunder without resistance, and torture without reproof: all this, nay more, he may accomplish with impunity. But can happiness be derived from the practice of vice or the diffusion of woe? Is there no such thing as an accusing conscience? Is there no such sensation as mental disquietude? Can a man fly from the bitter reproaches of his heart? Can he arrest the hated activity of his thoughts? Can he completely extirpate the sentiments of feeling, and deaden the operations of reflection? No! These various principles will, at times, intrude, and inform him how base, how mean, how despicable he is.

How the false lustre of such a station

is obscured by the virtues of the honest, upright man; whose good offices are proportioned to his means; whose bosom is warmed with the pure emotions of generosity; who glories in the extension of benevolence; and who knows no pleasure so exquisite, as that of imparting consolation and relief! *His* happiness is uniform; *his* satisfaction is solid; and although not clothed with the purple, or armed with the authority of tyrants, he possesses the love, the esteem, the veneration, of his fellow-creatures. O greatness! profit by the example of those whom you consider as your inferiours; be convinced that you are no more, in the eye of God, than other men; learn therefore moderation, and practise virtue.

During our residence at Fokshan, we received several visits from the governor

of the Moldavian side of the town, who was a polite, well-bred man, and afforded us every assistance in his power. He spoke Italian fluently, and in conversation was intelligent and communicative. He had travelled in the civilized parts of Europe, and had learnt enough of their policy and internal government, to entertain but a mean opinion of those which were established in Turkey.

One of the evenings, whilst we were detained here, we went to a Greek christening. The father and other relations of the child had previously waited on us, to beg our attendance, and also, to solicit Madame V—— to stand godmother; to which she immediately consented. The service lasted about an hour. It was performed, in the literal Greek, by one of the papas or priests, who read with great

solemnity; and, in point of form and ceremony, it, in most respects, resembled the Roman Catholic service on these occasions. The chief difference is, that the Greek ritual requires immersion instead of sprinkling, and the poor little innocent had a complete ducking. It is, indeed, the opinion of many, that immersion, in the primitive ages of the church, was universally practised, and that sprinkling in baptism originated in cold climates, a considerable time after the first establishment of Christianity. To a long list of names, which the Greeks consider as a mark of distinction, that of Madame V—— was subjoined.

On the eve of our departure, one of the prince of Walachia's officers arrived, who, supplying the place of the Moldavian, attended us to Bucharest. The

principal use of these officers, is to procure you lodgings wherever you pass the night; for, in this part of the world, there are no inns, and without their intervention you might frequently apply for shelter in vain. They, however, manage matters without much ceremony, for, being authorized by the prince to turn any person out of his house, the unfortunate vassal never ventures to disobey the imperious summons. I confess that my heart revolted at being obliged to have recourse to this barbarous privilege; and although we always endeavoured to satisfy the ejected tenant by the gift of some money, I still thought it a hard lot to be reconciled to, and could not help deploring the necessity of the case. Amongst the most stupid and uninformed, ideas of property must obtain, and they cannot

avoid perceiving, that nature has given them an absolute right over what they have acquired by the labour of their hands. Despotism proceeds, in all its acts, in a very harsh and summary way, and although mankind may be trained to submit to many sufferings and abuses without repining, yet there are proceedings at which they must revolt, which carry with them the legible characters of injustice, and which no mind can possibly miscomprehend.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XX.

Bucharest, June 16, 1792.

WE left Fokshan on the 9th, and, towards the evening, reached Tirkukoli, which is such a miserable village, that my brother and I, after searching in vain for a lodging barely decent, were forced to abandon the point, and to pass the night in an open carriage. Nothing can be more disgusting than the scenes which these hovels exhibit. They are the receptacles of poverty and dirt. The floors are generally of clay, and the nauseous suffocating smells which exhale from the filth with which they are covered is quite insufferable.

Whilst we were here, our compassion

was excited to a very high degree. About an hour after our arrival, just as night was setting in, and we were chatting over our adventures, we suddenly perceived a strong light. We immediately ran out, when we discovered that it proceeded from a house, at some distance, which was on fire. We felt ourselves interested on various accounts, and were determined, if possible, to reach the spot. We accordingly set out on our expedition, and, crossing over several fields and ditches, arrived in time to be witnesses of a scene of consummate horror and desolation.

The houses, in this part of Turkey, being built of wood, and thatched with rushes or straw, are entirely composed of combustible materials; and the inhabitants not being furnished with engines or any proper machines for the conveyance

of water in cases of such emergency, the ravages of fire are generally dreadful.

When we arrived, the flames were spreading very rapidly, and the miserable tenants were making their escape through the door and windows, in the utmost confusion. They had only time to save *themselves*. All the little comforts (and God knows they were few enough) which they had, with prudent parsimony, been treasuring up for years, fell a sacrifice to the fury of this insatiable element. The women, with scarcely any clothes to cover them, for they had been alarmed from their beds, were half frantic. Some of them had their infant children in their arms, and were protecting them as well as they could from the cold. Thus assembled, they sat on the bare ground close to each other; and whilst they kept their eyes fixed alternately on the flames and their

children, they bewailed the horrors of their fate, and made the air resound with the most piercing shrieks. I think I never in my life beheld a more interesting group. It was capable of awakening sensations of pity and sympathy in the hardest heart that ever beat. We can survey, with a certain degree of composure, the misfortunes of those, who have reached the season of maturity, and who are endowed with strength to contend against the storms of fortune; but when women and helpless infants are placed before our eyes, surrounded with perils from which there is no protection, and invoking the clemency of God to save them from total destruction; when we see the sentiments of nature prevail, after the dictates of reason have nearly lost their influence; when amidst the ruin and confusion of such a spectacle we behold

a mother, in a state of distraction, still obeying the more powerful sway of instinct, and, whilst the mind is absorbed by the contemplation of every thing that is horrible and tremendous, the heart is engaged in fulfilling one of its tenderest and most essential offices; it is as impossible to dwell on a scene of such complicated affection, anxiety, and distress, without emotion, as it is to restore life when every pulse has ceased to vibrate. The men, however, displayed more firmness, and were actively employed in pulling down a house, which was removed a few yards from that on fire. This method succeeded, and probably saved the remainder of the village from destruction.

Both my brother and I, commiserating the hard lot of these unfortunate sufferers, offered them money; but

whether they could not understand our intentions, or mistook us for Russians, from whom they have so lately experienced every calamity, I am at a loss to say; but they positively refused all pecuniary relief, and turned from us with visible signs of perturbation and dread. Under these circumstances, as we were separated from our guard, we thought it prudent to retreat.

On the 10th, we dined at Ribnik, which is delightfully situated in a rich country, abounding with wood and fine pasturages.

This place, before the war, was a considerable town, consisting of six or seven hundred houses, which the Turks, previous to their departure, from mere wantonness, reduced to about fifty. Can you, my friend, imagine an injustice, a base-

ness, a cruelty, superior to this? The very contemplation of such unprovoked and consummate iniquity, must raise a flame of indignation and resentment in every honest breast!—Oh! how despicable does human nature appear, when we see strength triumphing over weakness, and practising barbarity and oppression, only because no risk is incurred, and no resistance can succeed! To a mind of any sentiment whatever, that ferocious depravity of heart, which propels a people to ravage and destroy, without pity or remorse, its dependent territories, is quite inexplicable. Yet, however extraordinary, it is still a truth, that both in Moldavia and Walachia, during the whole of the late war, the Turks were more dreaded than either the Germans or the Russians: and not without reason; for in every

place in which they were quartered, they have left signal marks of their avarice and brutality.

It was our intention to have crossed the Buseo this evening, and to have slept at the town of that name which is on the opposite side ; but the heavy rains, which had fallen the two preceding days, had so swollen the river, that it was not fordable, and we were obliged to pass the night in a boyar's house which, a few months before, had been entirely dismantled by the Turks, who, as a token of their contempt, had used it as a stable. The whole village of Marachini, near which it stands, as well as its inhabitants, belongs to the estate, and when it changes masters, they are transferred with it, like other common goods and chattels. Thus you see, in this unfortunate country, the people

are degraded below the ordinary level of servitude, and the most objectionable and odious part of the feudal system is allowed to retain its primitive force.

The boyars are the nobility, or rather the land-holders, of the country. They possess a great deal of power, of which they make a very bad use; and the hope of one day obtaining the government of the province, is an unceasing spur to their ambition and extortion. They are continually tampering with the Porte, and are generally engaged in cabals and intrigues against the reigning prince.

Shortly after our arrival at Marachini, not choosing to trust entirely to the reports of the villagers, in order to satisfy myself about the real state of the river, I took a walk to its banks, which were at the distance of about a mile. But I

found it as they had represented. On my return, I was suddenly caught in a violent shower of rain, and was obliged to take shelter in a mill. I was in the English dress, and had a hanger in my hand, without which, indeed, I never venture to go out alone. The miller and his men seemed to be much surpris'd at the sudden appearance of a stranger, thus habited, and thus armed. They however behaved very civilly, allowed me to warm myself at an excellent fire, and, when I left them, one of them respectfully attended me to the door.

Early in the morning, we began our preparations for fording the Busco, which although lightly thought of at first, we soon found to be an undertaking of no small difficulty. Its banks are steep and sandy, and it branches into several

streams, whose currents were so impetuous, that most of our waggons, notwithstanding they were supported, on each side, by several men, narrowly escaped being overset.

Having a letter of introduction to the governor of the town, on our arrival, we were politely received by him, and he ordered a dinner to be immediately prepared for us. His conversation, for a long time, turned entirely on the disasters which the town had experienced, from the ungovernable licentiousness of the soldiery, and he dwelt on their cruelty and insolence with the most expressive manifestations of horror and compassion. He informed us, that a few years ago, there were in Buseo upwards of two thousand houses, and that it had been reduced to its present situation (which is that of

a contemptible village) by the Turks, who, before they quitted it, wantonly set it on fire, and plundered the inhabitants.

As soon as he heard that we were Englishmen, he launched out in praise of our country and its manufactures, and lamented that none of them, particularly fire-arms (of which the Greeks as well as the Turks are passionately fond), were to be procured at Busco. My brother, fortunately, had with him a pair of English pistols which had been manufactured for Turkey, and which, although not of superior workmanship, were calculated to please the governor of a Greek town. What he had said had so flattered our nationality, that the generous feelings of our hearts were awakened, and we immediately begged his acceptance of

them. He hesitated at first, but, strongly urging our solicitations, he at length complied. He felt the full force of the compliment, and desirous of making some compensation, he insisted on sending us forward to Bucharest in his own carriage with six horses, and hoped that, by returning to Busco at some future period, we should afford him an opportunity of testifying his gratitude. Notwithstanding his importunity, we persisted in declining his offer, till he yielded; and I shall consider myself unfortunate if I am ever in a situation to require the hospitality, which he so liberally proffered. I do not, however, consider myself less obliged to him, for no man could have behaved with greater urbanity and politeness.

Going hence to Aformatzi, we traversed a fertile and agreeable country.

The high mountains, which are the boundaries of the Turkish and Hungarian dominions, are seen at a distance, and form the limits of several enchanting prospects. For the last seven or eight miles, the road winds through a delicious wood, where I frequently descended from our waggon to gather wild flowers, which spring up in great abundance and variety.

My principal motive for remarking Aformatzi, is not on account of its consequence (for it is but a small village consisting of huts), but because there is near it a spacious mansion (where we slept) which was built for the reception of travellers, by prince Ipsillanti, a man highly and deservedly celebrated in this country, for strength of understanding and benevolence of heart.

This prince reigned nine successive years over Walachia, and, by the vigour and purity of his government, acquired universal love and esteem. The Turkish court, which is uniformly actuated by the vilest policy, at last became jealous of his abilities, and, dreading the consequences of his popularity and his riches, thought proper to remove him. Since then, he has lived on his own estate, as a private gentleman, still however continuing to bestow his bounty on all, and applying the honourable fruits of his administration and his labours, in relieving the wants and alleviating the distresses of his fellow creatures.

What a misfortune to any country must be the loss of such a prince; but, more especially, when the government is absolute, and the will of the sovereign is

its law ! for then, the fate of the subject is entirely dependent on the qualities of the ruler ; happy or miserable, flourishing or disastrous, as his dispositions and talents are good or bad.

If human nature were perfect ; if the heart of man were always regulated by reason, benevolence, and justice ; and never enslaved, corrupted, or biaſſed, by interest or paſſion ; of all others, an absolute government would certainly be the most desirable and the best ; for justly, discreetly, and wisely administered, it is capable of communicating the greatest degree, both of individual happiness, and political strength. Such a government, regulated by an able and virtuous prince, must renew the felicity of the golden age ; for, desiring the honour, prosperity, and welfare of his people, and perceiving in

what they must consist, he has also, as far at least as depends on human foresight and exertion, the power of conferring them.

As we approached Bucharest, our postillions, at times, made great exertions, and drove us an excellent pace. I often wondered, how they contrived to manage our waggons so well, for some of them were drawn by eight or ten horses, which were placed three, and sometimes four, abreast: and the reins and harness, which were chiefly composed of cord, were always more or less entangled and deranged.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXI.

Tour Rouge, June 21, 1792.

ABOUT two o'clock on the 13th, after a pleasant journey from Aformatzi, we arrived at Bucharest, which is the capital of Walachia and the residence of the prince*. It is agreeably situated on the brow of a gently rising hill; is contracted in breadth, but extended in length; and, from the many trees which

* Formerly the princes of Walachia resided at Tergovist, which is about thirty miles to the north-east of Bucharest, and is a considerable city. In those days it was regarded as the capital of Walachia. The Princes of Walachia are also styled Hospodars, and, by the Poles and Russians, Waywodes, a word of Sclavonian origin, signifying a governor or general.

are interspersed among the houses, has a good deal the appearance, as you approach it, of an overgrown village. Some of the houses are of wood; but they are chiefly built of brick, which is plastered and whitewashed, and, instead of boards, their floors are of brick. The sofa is the principal, and frequently the only, piece of furniture with which their rooms are provided, and which, as with the Turks, is applied to the double purpose of a seat by day, and a bed at night. All the streets are laid with thick planks, which traverse them from one side to the other, forming a kind of perpetual wooden bridge, which is expensive, disagreeable, and inconvenient, but has been adopted on account of the nature of the soil, which will not bind, or admit of a firm foundation. Many of these planks have a great elasti-

city, so that, when you are in a carriage, you are sometimes tossed about in the strangest manner imaginable, and the clouds of dust, which fly from them on a windy day, are a dreadful annoyance.

When I inform you that the number of large churches alone, amounts to three hundred and sixty*, you will naturally infer that all the inhabitants are priests. A great proportion of them, I believe, is; but although they wear the outward garb of religion, they are, by all accounts, far from distinguishing themselves, either by their devotion or morality, from the common herd of mankind. This indeed is almost always the case, when the clerical pro-

* I did not count them myself; but several people assured me that this number was not exaggerated.

session is overstocked with ministers; for when the calls of duty are trivial and few, men will be lazy, and laziness will uniformly relax virtue, and frequently engender vice. These churches, which are built in the form of a Greek cross, are, in general, heavy structures, and the walls being covered, both within and without, with glaring uncouth paintings, representing the Greek saints and different parts of ecclesiastical history, have a gaudy and inelegant appearance. How would Apelles, or Zeuxis, or Protogenes, be amazed, could they revisit the earth, and behold their descendants paying to such burlesque and offensive figures, the tribute which is only due to the happiest efforts of genius, and the most masterly execution of art!

All the rich boyars reside here in the

winter, and some of them live in great profusion and splendour. As a proof of the haughtiness of their notions, it is considered as ungenteel, and quite inconsistent with their dignity, to be seen in the city on foot, so that every person, who can afford the expence, keeps his carriage. The number and variety of vehicles, which are constructed for the indulgence of this luxury, are quite incredible, and many of them are very elegant and costly. They however build scarce any of them at Bucharest, but purchase them chiefly in Hungary or at Vienna.

Some of the streets are wide and regular, and the bazar, which is a spacious building, is well furnished with merchandize.

On the 15th we took a ride to see the

environs of the city, and in our way stopped at a kiosk, belonging to the principality, a place only worth noticing on account of its situation, which is extremely pleasant, and commands an extensive view over a fine champaign country.

From this kiosk we drove to a public walk, where we found a number of people of both sexes collected, enjoying the coolness of the evening air. We immediately alighted from our carriage, and joined them; but I was not much gratified with the animate objects of the landscape, for it seemed as if all the hideous women of Walachia were assembled on this spot. An ugly face, a misshapen person, and unpolished manners, were united in each, and they really much more resembled the grotesque and haggard witches in Macbeth, than the lovely and

amiable part of the creation. We immediately attracted their notice, and they gathered round us that they might examine us more minutely. Had we been thus encircled by the charms of grace and youth and beauty, how opposite would have been my sensations! I should then, in return, have gazed at them, till I had been lost in admiration and delight: but these unfortunate nymphs were not calculated to inspire any such emotions, and we were glad to avail ourselves of an early opportunity of returning to our carriage, and hastening home.

On the 16th we dined at the Russian consul's, who feasted us so sumptuously, that I could scarcely help imagining I was either at Paris or London. We spent a most agreeable day, for we had not only an excellent dinner, but excellent wine, and,

what is still better than either, excellent conversation. After a journey through an uncivilised country, we feel a great satisfaction in the society of polite, informed, and accomplished persons. Their conversation and their manners recall to the mind a thousand pleasing images, and, as it were, renew our acquaintance with those habits and pursuits in which we were bred. The Russian and the German consuls are at present the only two gentlemen established here, in a public capacity, from any of the European courts, with which indeed there is but little intercourse. Bucharest being far removed from any navigable river, and the conveyances by land being insecure, and uncertain in point of time, there is neither opportunity nor encouragement

for the occupations of extensive commerce.

Monf. Codrika, the prince's first secretary, a gentleman of information and polished manners, who had, from our first arrival, shewn us every civility and attention, being very desirous that we should see the court before we left Bucharest, we, according to appointment, accompanied him there in the morning on the 17th.

As we had not been formally introduced, it was the *etiquette*, on our entrance, to notice nobody. The prince, in a rich Grecian dress, was seated on a sofa, with his two sons on his right hand; and the bishops and nobles were ranged, according to their precedence, on his left. A great deal of respect and ceremony was observed, but it was not a day of much

business. Some dispatches were read, and a few petitions presented, whilst the prince was drinking his coffee, and smoking his pipe, which was of cherry wood, above six feet long, with an elegant bowl, and a lip of amber. Every body paid him the most obsequious deference, and, whenever he opened his lips, a profound silence reigned throughout the hall. Before we retired, he ordered his secretary to beg the favour of our company to drink coffee with him in private, after the levee. So courteous an invitation was not to be rejected. We accordingly waited on him at the appointed time, and were received with all the politeness imaginable. We had not been seated long, when several attendants entered, and, after offering us pipes, presented us

with coffee* and sweetmeats, which were both of an exquisite flavour. By means of his secretary (who speaks French with fluency and elegance) he entered into conversation with us. He paid us many handsome compliments as Englishmen, and suspected that, after having visited the most civilized and flourishing kingdoms of Europe, we could derive but little advantage or satisfaction from travelling through Walachia. This was a natural and a rational remark, and, al-

* The Turks and Greeks have a particular method of preparing their coffee. After it has been roasted, instead of grinding it, they pound it in a mortar, and boil it on the grounds of coffee that has been used. They drink it frequently, in the course of the day, and always present it to visitors. Their cups, which are very small, are generally of fine porcelain, and are placed in a second cup of gold or silver, elegantly embossed, or worked in filligree. In these articles the rich go to an astonishing expence.

though I did not tell him so, I gave him credit for the ingenuousness with which it was made. He lamented several times, with apparent sincerity, the situation of his own country, which had so lately been the scene of rapine and bloodshed, and hoped that his exertions would shortly restore it to happiness and plenty. I really admired him for his sentiments and his good sense. If every prince thought thus, and allowed his thoughts to guide his actions, what an additional sum of felicity would be enjoyed by the mass of mankind! Still it is very strange and mysterious that any prince should think otherwise, for what reward can be more flattering to the ambition of a man who thirsts after fame, or more grateful to the feelings of a man who has any respect for virtue, than a voluntary tribute of grati-

tude and esteem, flowing from the undisguised affection of his people ?

A few minutes after we withdrew, he sent his secretary to us with two general letters ; one to the postmasters, ordering them to furnish us, through his dominions, with six horses, at his own expence ; and the other, addressed to the governors of the cities we were to pass through, recommending us to their particular notice, and desiring them to give us every assistance in their power.

The princes of Walachia are appointed by the Porte, and they receive their investiture by a standard and vest which are presented by the sultan. But it requires an immense sum of money to obtain this mark of distinction. In addition to this, the grand seignor claims an annual tribute, which, with the various contin-

gencies of bribery, to which it is necessary to attend, at a court where corruption is the source and soul of power, swallows up a great part of the revenue of the principality. Within their territories they are absolute, and can levy troops, impose taxes, and enact laws at pleasure. When, however, the grand seignor is engaged in hostilities with any foreign power, they are, if required, obliged to raise men, and to join the Ottoman forces, like the vassals of the feudal times, who were bound to follow and defend their lord paramount.

They, in general, keep a splendid court; but as the palace (which was a spacious and magnificent structure) was burnt, during the war, the present prince is obliged to take up his residence in a

monastery, and to live in a less expensive manner till it can be rebuilt.

The court of the princess is quite distinct from that of the prince, and at her levees no gentlemen are admitted, except on some particular days, which seldom occur.

The revenue of the principality amounts, annually, to about five million piaſtres, above one half of which is claimed by the Porte: the remainder is allotted to the prince, to defray the expences of his government, and to enable him to maintain a splendour, ſuitable to the importance of his office and the dignity of his rank.

The principal productions of the country are wax, wool, grain and wine, with which a conſiderable trade is carried on to Conſtantinople, and different parts

of Hungary and Russia. The wheat which this country produces is black, from which it derived the Turkish name Carabogdana, which signifies the *Land of Black Wheat*. In some of the mountains there are extensive gold mines, which, if skilfully worked, might be of considerable value; and pieces of gold, of a very pure quality, are frequently found in the sand, on the banks of the large rivers. The climate is good, and the soil luxuriant; but it is badly cultivated, and a great proportion of it is totally neglected. This, however, is not to be wondered at, and must ever be the case, where the subject is unprotected, and entirely dependent on the will of the ruler: for what man can be expected to exert his ingenuity, or to distinguish himself for his industry, when

he is uncertain by whom the fruits of his labours will be reaped?

But what in this country, more particularly extinguishes every spark of emulation, and creates diffidence and alarm, is its frequent change of masters. In general, the princes are only appointed to the government for three years, and though they are sometimes continued beyond that period, they are more commonly dismissed before its expiration. A candidate, who has plenty of money, will part with it freely, and promise to the Porte a larger tribute than is paid by the reigning prince, has almost always sufficient weight and interest to occasion his downfall. Whilst they are in power, their grand object is to enrich themselves as much as possible, that they

may not only recover what has been disbursed for their station (which is always purchased), but also, that they may amass a sufficiency of additional wealth, to be able, by bribery, to ward off the blow which frequently succeeds their deposition, and which is nothing more or less than the loss of their heads. Such is the award which commonly awaits those who rise to posts of eminence in Turkey! Yet, notwithstanding the perils with which this high office is surrounded, it is sought after with the keenest avidity: a proof how readily we are enticed on to ruin by the insignificance of ideal advantages, and how easily we are blinded in our conjectures of more distant events, by the animating, yet deceitful, prospect of immediate or approaching enjoyment!

But if the appointment were for life, these views would cease, and these fears would vanish. It would then be the interest of the prince to promote the happiness, and advance the political consequence of his people, and, by encouraging agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, to insure and perpetuate a regular and increasing revenue.

The present prince, however, is much beloved, and has the character of being a worthy, nay even a patriotic man. Though not possessed of the talents, in point of goodness and benevolence of heart, he resembles his predecessor Ipsilanti, and, in consequence of his popularity, is so apprehensive of the machinations and intrigues of the Turkish court, that he judges it necessary, for his safety, to open all the letters, which

are sent from Bucharest to Constantinople.

A number of Hungarians, Saxons, Armenians, and Jews, is established in different parts of Walachia, and, possessing much more enterprise and perseverance than the natives, what commerce the country, in its present impoverished and exhausted state, admits of, is chiefly carried on by them. The Walachians, however, are proud of their origin, which they trace from the ancient Romans. It is a pity but this pride should animate them to achieve something worthy of such a noble ancestry.

It was our intention to have left Bucharest on the day following our arrival, but we had great difficulty in procuring a carriage; for, notwithstanding the number which was continually rattling about

the streets, there was but one in the town on sale, for which, taking advantage of our situation, we were obliged to pay very handsomely. In all countries self-interest, I observe, is sufficiently understood, to enable a dealer in any article to discover every opportunity which arises of exacting from a stranger an exorbitant profit. Conceiving that he shall deal with him but once, he is little careful what opinion may be formed of his integrity, and easily allows his scruples of conscience to be overruled by the allurements of interest. The prince had, indeed, politely sent us an araba with the horses, but it was in such a crazy condition that we were fearful of venturing to undertake in it so long a journey. Having, therefore, purchased a carriage, and provided ourselves with a ser-

vant, who understands the Walachian and Hungarian languages, on the 18th we took our leave of V—— and his family, who purpose settling at Buchoreft.

Till we reached Petesti, we only passed through miserable villages, where we could procure no other provisions than eggs, bad bread and sour wine, and even these articles were carefully concealed, till the payment was secured. The road to this place, without being much indebted to art, is tolerably good, and the postillions drove us remarkably well. The country is undulated, and, in some parts, mountainous; but is very fertile, and abounds in wood and rich pasturages.

At Petesti, which is a small town, pleasantly situated on the western side of the river Argis, we paid a visit to the go-

vernor, who, according to the fashion of the country, presented us with coffee and sweetmeats; and, when we took our leave, his servant followed us to the carriage with a cheese and two loaves of bread, which we accepted without any ceremony. Notwithstanding this munificent present, we purchased, in addition, a few eatables at a shop; a precaution which, when opportunity permitted, we had for some time past punctually adhered to, and which the consideration of what we had formerly endured, seemed fully to authorize and enjoin.

The dust, which the horses, as we went along, kicked up in clouds, had so soiled our clothes, that, when we presented ourselves to the governor, we must have had more the appearance of pedlars than of gentlemen, and he eyed us so

narrowly, that I have often thought since, he had some suspicion we were impostors. The propriety, however, of changing our dress did not occur till it was too late; but, determined not to experience a second time, at least that day, the embarrassment to which it had subjected us, whilst the horses were putting to, at the next stage, we scampered into a neighbouring wood, where, screened from public view by the thickness of the trees, we adonized ourselves from top to toe. It was, indeed, to such places as this that we had been generally obliged to repair, when we wished to change our clothes, for we could seldom procure above one apartment, which we of course gave up to the ladies.

Leaving Petesti, the road for several miles is rough and mountainous, and is af-

terwards continued through a beautiful wood, abounding in a variety of large well-grown trees, graced with a luxuriant foliage, and presenting some of the most lively and picturesque views that I ever beheld.

When it became dark, we observed, as we went along, several caverns, at no great distance from the road, dug out of a rock, in each of which a number of people was assembled, and making merry round a blazing fire. It was a scene which struck, and which pleased us very much. The grotesque appearance of their figures and dress, added to their movements, and the vivid gleam which the light reflected on their countenances; the solemn silence which prevailed, except now and then when it was interrupted by a hollow deep-toned voice, or a violent burst of

laughter; the thick shade of the trees, and the sequestered retirement of the spot; brought to mind, more than once, Le Sage's description in *Gil Blas* of the den of thieves.

On the 19th we arrived on the banks of the river Alt, but too late in the evening to cross, and were obliged to remain in our carriage all night, at a small village on the eastern side. We passed over it the next morning at day-break, in a ferry-boat, and then drove on till we came to Rimnic, which is a large and handsome town. As, however, we only stopped there whilst our horses were changing, you cannot expect that I should enter minutely into its history. Had it not been so early in the morning, we should certainly have paid our respects to the governor.

On the 20th, about four o'clock in the afternoon, we reached Kineni, where we presented a letter, from the prince of Walachia's secretary, to the vataf*, who received us with great respect, and regaled us with bread, eggs, and wine. The road from Rimnic to this place is so mountainous, that we judged it prudent to descend several times from our carriage.

We had made many inquiries on the way, whether or no we should have any quarantine to perform, on entering the emperor's dominions, and had always been answered in the negative. You may, therefore, conceive our mortification and surprise, when, on our arrival at the lazaretto of Tour Rouge, we were stopped, and told that we could not proceed any

* A vataf is an officer belonging to the customs.

farther, before the expiration of ten days. On explanation, we found it was not our residence in Walachia, but our visit to Constantinople, which subjected us to this penalty, nor could any one inform us what stay in Walachia would have entitled us to pass without detention. People who resided in the same house with us at Bucharest, so long as they had not entered the metropolis of the empire, would have been entitled to pass; a sufficient proof of the absurdity of the regulation; since it is evident that had we been infected, we must have communicated the disease to others. We should, I believe, have contrived to escape, had it not been for the stupidity of our servant, who, the instant the particulars of our route were inquired into, blundered upon Constantinople. Till then, our fate was

in suspense; but the moment the name of that infected city twanged in the ears of the officer that examined us, (who was a stiff German, with a great deal of pride and very little sense), he turned up his nose, and said, he need ask no more questions, for we could not possibly be suffered to go any farther.

The extreme ruggedness and steep descent of the road from Keneni rendered it very dangerous, and frequently warned us to alight from our carriage; but we were amply repaid for this inconvenience by the beauty and grandeur of the scenery which surrounded us. The soft, the wild, the magnificent, was contained within the circle which the eye encompassed. On one side hill arose on hill, in confused succession, till their summits were lost in the clouds; on another, the sight, as if to

recover itself from the fatigue of contemplating so much majesty, reposed on sloping meadows of the choicest verdure. As we advanced, Nature revealed herself in all her exuberance and eccentricity. Towering mountains, clothed with impenetrable woods; tremendous precipices rising perpendicularly from their base; and barren crags of endless and fantastic shape; by turns engaged the attention, and feasted the mind with alternate wonder and delight. The Alt, several hundred yards below, rolled its winding waters through a narrow valley, sometimes with an unruffled surface gliding gently in its bed, sometimes precipitating itself with fury from rock to rock, exhibiting one expanded sheet of foam, and making the country re-echo with its murmurs. We passed three monasteries which are de-

lightly situated on its banks, but which have remained tenantless since the war.

We had frequently, in the course of this long and tedious journey, particularly before our arrival at Bucharest, heard of bands of robbers, who infested and desolated particular districts. But, if there were any truth in these reports, we were certainly fortunate, for none of them ever molested us. One morning, indeed, after we left Fokshan, the ladies were rather alarmed by the sudden appearance of five horsemen, who, they insisted, must be free-booters. But these apprehensions soon ceased; for they turned out to be poor inoffensive fellows, who were travelling like ourselves, and had perhaps been harbouring the same suspicions against us, which, as we were by far the most nu-

merous party, might much more naturally arise. The poor wretches who drove us were the humblest creatures on earth, and had been so accustomed to nothing but stripes, that their expressions of gratitude for what we gave them, were fulsome in the extreme. How slavery debases the mind, and destroys all self-esteem! I like every man to behave with a proper and consistent respect towards his superiors, but I pity the wretch who cringes even to a king.

In a few words I can give you a description of the place of our confinement. It consists of about a dozen white-washed houses, standing in a bottom, and encompassed on every side, with high mountains, which are thickly clothed with trees. The river Alt winds through a valley at the back of the lazaretto, and, at the

distance of about a quarter of a mile on each side, there is a gate at which a few ragged sentinels are stationed, and which forms the boundaries of the space allowed to those who are under quarantine. We also have the privilege of wandering on the mountains, so that, compared with other places of the same nature, the confinement is not severely strict; but it is still confinement, and that is sufficient to create disgust.

Were I at liberty, I should perhaps be desirous of spending a few weeks here, for I suppose it is one of the wildest spots that is any where to be seen; but compulsion and imprisonment will depreciate and obscure the beauties of the most delightful and interesting scenes. We are, my friend, always longing after what is beyond our reach, and are always dissatisf-

fied with what we actually possess: such is the construction and history of the human mind!

If you could have a peep into our room, I think you would be a good deal diverted with our contrivances. It is both bed-room and sitting-room (for we are only allowed one), and is totally unprovided with furniture, having neither bed, table, nor chair. When I first entered, I asked, where we were to sleep? and the fellow furlily answered, *There*, pointing to some planks, which are raised a few feet from the floor, and extended along one side of the wall.

Depending on procuring every kind of comfortable accommodation, when we once got into the dominions of a Christian emperor, in order to diminish the bulk of our baggage, we had left our beds

at Bucharest. Others were not, however, to be procured here ; and to make as good a substitute as we could (there being no straw in the village) we ordered our servant to purchase a large bundle of hay, which is laid on the planks, and tossed out, at night, in the shape of two beds with bolsters. We then spread our sheets, (which we have fortunately preserved) and, instead of blankets and quilts, we cover ourselves with wearing apparel. But, in spite of all our care, our beds are very uncomfortable, for the hay works through the linen, and, whenever we move, scratches us like pins, so that it is impossible to get any sound sleep. A few hours after our arrival, a fellow obliged us to open all our trunks, and to have the contents (in order to purify them from the plague) suspended on pegs round the

room. They are hanging there still, and give it the exact appearance of a pawnbroker's shop. When we dine, we make use of the planks on which we sleep, as a table, and our trunks turned on their sides, are our chairs. But what is ten times worse than all this, we can scarcely get any thing to eat, and what little we do get, is so bad, that nothing but absolute necessity could force it down our throats. I hope, when I next write you, I shall be able to give you a better account of our comforts.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXII.

Lazaretto of Tour Rouge,
June 29, 1792.

THANK God! our quarantine terminates this day, and to-morrow we shall be at liberty to prosecute our journey to Vienna.

When I tell you that those misfortunes, of which I so bitterly complained in my last, have, with but little intermission or alleviation, been continued till now, you may easily conceive that we have not spent our time very agreeably. Had it not been for the pleasant society of Monsieur M——, a French officer of our acquaintance, who arrived here but

two days after we, I believe that the few sparks of gaiety which still animated us, would have been soon extinguished, and we should have sunk under the burden of our numerous vexations. As it was, we contrived to laugh now and then, and the recollection of our sufferings was frequently driven away by the pleasures of cheerful conversation.

Our provisions, for the first four days, were not only infamously bad, but so scanty, that we really were almost starved; and, determined, if possible, to procure some relief, I forwarded a letter of recommendation to Monsieur Maltus, a gentleman at the head of the customs at the town of Tour Rouge, which is distant but a few miles. He politely waited on us the following day, and I never in my life recollect meeting with a person who,

on a bare letter of recommendation, before he was at all acquainted with me, treated me with such cordial kindness and civility. He made us an entire offer of his services, and begged, that, whenever we had occasion for any thing which he could procure, we would, without ceremony, acquaint him with our necessities. We considered these, at the moment, as mere words of compliment. They, however, turned out otherwise; for, the next morning, he sent his servant with a basket of provisions from his farm, and a very polite message, begging that we would do him the honour of calling on him, as we passed through Tour Rouge in our way to Hermanstadt. From this time our fortune began to mend, and the succeeding day a peasant, who had been hunting on the mountains,

brought us a roe-buck, which we purchased of him for eighteen pence. It was, notwithstanding, considered as a great prize, and the governor, hearing of our good luck, exerted his interest for a share of it. But it was made so dry and hard by being badly dressed, that we could scarcely eat it. Another time, we bought a lamb for sixpence. It was not, to be sure, much larger than a hare, and the man stipulated to have the skin, which, being black, was by far the most valuable part of the animal, it being the general covering of the kalpak, a kind of bonnet much worn in Turkey by the Armenians. When we were in want of wine, we were obliged to send to a place three or four miles off; but it was execrable stuff, and kept us very sober.

A poor fellow, who has a boat on the

river, has been out a fishing for an hour or two every day since we have been here ; but he is so unsuccessful, that he has only caught one small fish, which he reserved for us. Must it not be a shocking country for an Englishman, where neither land nor water furnishes food ?

We are now in the emperor of Germany's dominions. I will not, however, totally abandon the subject of Turkey, without giving you some account of the customs and manners of its inhabitants. Not that I propose entering into any elaborate or minute detail ; but, merely by delineating the leading and prominent features, I shall endeavour to convey to your mind a just notion of their general character.

This vast empire is inhabited by four distinct races of people, viz. the Turks, the Greeks, the Jews, and the Armenians.

The Jews are much more numerous than the Armenians; but, as they betray exactly the same characteristics which distinguish them in other parts of the globe, and as there is nothing, but what I have already mentioned, particularly remarkable or interesting in the habits of the Armenians, I shall confine my observations to the Turks and Greeks.

With the origin of the Turks you are already well acquainted; and it would be superfluous, whilst I am addressing myself to you, to enumerate the various causes which combined to unite and to direct their exertions, and to render them not only a respectable but a formidable nation. But that vigour and persevering activity which, at the beginning of their history, shone forth so conspicuously, and which, at one time, tore up every obstruction

which checked the progress of their arms, and almost threatened the dissolution of every existing state, have, long since, totally disappeared. At present, they are an enervated, a superstitious, an ignorant, and a sluggish people; the bigotted slaves of a tyrannic government; the declared enemy of the arts and sciences; and the firm opposer of every useful institution. Too stupid to comprehend, or too proud to learn, or too infatuated to be convinced, they blindly follow the pursuits of luxury in the very bosom of despotism, and although they are surrounded, on almost every side, by civilized and enlightened nations, their attachment to opinions which are founded in folly, and upheld by prejudice, does not diminish.

When we consider what a long period of time has elapsed, since the light

of reason first began to dispel the thick cloud of ignorance which once darkened the face of Europe, and, by degrees, to rouse, to inform, to refine, and to illumine, the understanding of man, we are astonished that this people should have remained stationary, and, in spite of the influence of example, should still be guided by an unshaken adherence to their former notions and errors.

Whilst we are making the remark, we feel inclined to investigate the cause whence such a blind, deep-rooted veneration originates. Is it occasioned by the natural disposition of the people? Surely not.—Does it then arise from the vices of a government, which is peculiarly framed to deaden the faculties of the mind, and to eradicate the feelings of the heart? Much may, no doubt, be attri-

buted to its influence ; yet that wonderful degree of mental apathy and bodily indolence, which they have gradually allowed to overwhelm them, appears to me to be principally derived from a still more potent source. It is the ridiculous doctrines of their religion (engrafted in a moment of enthusiasm, and cultivated and strengthened by the imposing arts of succeeding ages) which have thus fatally operated, and which, though first used as an instrument to excite, have been since employed as an engine to crush, the restless propensity of man.

The firm belief of predestination, which is a principal article of faith, and one of the indispensable duties of a musliman, is, perhaps, the most powerful political machine, which stupidity ever submitted to, or craft ever devised.

It deprives man of all the energy and sublimity of his character. His free-agency is gone, and he moves with careless and uniform unconcern in whatever circle he chances to find himself. Whether obedience is to be insured, or sedition promoted, it is equally calculated to impose on the credulity of the multitude; and to the prevalence of this absurd tenet, many of the revolutions, which have happened at Constantinople, may be traced.

A Turk regards every occurrence of his life with the same torpid indifference; and, being fully persuaded, that no exertion or prudence can prolong his happiness, or avert his destruction, it very frequently happens, that neither the prospect of security, nor the approach of danger, can animate his perceptions, or awaken

him from his lethargy. Grave and uncommunicative, rather from habit than from nature, as if the pleasures of society were totally estranged from his breast, he trifles away his life in the listlessness of indolence and inactivity; and, as if entirely separated from the concerns of the world, and uninterested in the welfare of his species, he scarcely fulfils one duty which can render him serviceable to his fellow-creatures. If he reads the Koran a specified number of times; prays at stated hours, either at home or at mosch, five times a day; and conforms to a few of the positive ordinances of his prophet; he imagines that he has discharged every obligation which is either requisite or important, and that, as a recompense for such exact and scrupulous obedience, he has secured, in a future state, the endless

and voluptuous enjoyments of his ideal paradise.

Superstition, which is the mother of the strangest absurdities and contradictions, notwithstanding the fatalism of the Turks, disposes them to celebrate eclipses with extraordinary solemnity. If one happen to occur during the night, they are roused from their slumbers by the cries of the muezzins; and, on hearing the summons, they instantly rise, repair to their moschs, and, by vows and supplications, endeavour to avert the menaces of such an alarming omen. This is certainly a direct departure from their leading tenets; but who can pretend to account for the wild incongruities of the human mind, when it is under the agency of this eccentric passion? How easily might these stupid fears be removed by a

little knowledge in astronomy ! But superstition and ignorance must ever go hand in hand.

What superstition, firmly engrafted on the human intellect, can accomplish, the history of the world sufficiently informs us. Above all, look to the persecuting zeal and fatal absurdities of the Romish church. What do they exhibit but an unrelenting and sanguinary spirit, but an endless chain of contradictory errors and vices ? It was left to modern France to demonstrate to us, that the absence of all religion is attended with nearly the same effects. There is, however, this distinction to be discovered between superstition and atheism, that the one is the perversion of judgment, acting on the feebleness and vacuity of the mental powers ; whereas the other, with coolness and caution, combats

with the subtlety of reason, and its spirit is as daring as its practice is profligate. The one may be strenuous in mischief with good intentions; but the other, willingly and openly, violates every duty that is binding on men, and plants a deadly dagger in the vitals of the economy of nature, and the happiness and hopes both of a present and a future state.

Their religion is supported at an immense expence, and it is calculated that the church is in possession of nearly one third of the domains of the empire. Its ministers, of whom the musti is the head, are innumerable: and the revenues of some of the royal moschs amount to the almost incredible sum of 60,000*l.* sterling, which is applied to the discharge of the wages of the different officers; the maintenance of the hospitals in the neigh-

bourhood; the instruction of students in the law of Mahomet; and the relief of the poor. The mufti is appointed by the grand feignor, and generally holds his situation for life. He is fovereign pontiff, expounder of the law of Mahomet, and fupreme director of all religious concerns. He is regarded as the oracle of fanctity and wifdom; and having an extenfive authority, both over the actions and confciences of men, his office is one of the moft dignified and lucrative in the empire. The fultan confults him on all momentous occafions, falutes him with marked refpect, and never refufes him an audience. He interprets the Koran according to the fuggeftions of confcience or whim, and from his decifion there is no appeal. There are numerous cadis under him, of different ranks, to whom

he refers questions of trifling moment, and who relieve him from the drudgery of his office.

The Koran, comprehending both the canonical and civil law of the Turks, the character and profession of a priest and a lawyer are blended in one. The effendis are in possession of all the literature and liberal arts of the country. They apply themselves to the study of the book of Mahomet and its commentators; to the cultivation of poetry, arithmetic, and music; and from their body most of the great officers of the empire are generally chosen.

The Turks are extremely proud, which is one great cause of their gravity and their taciturnity, laughter and familiar conversation being, in their ideas, derogatory from dignity. They affect to hold,

in thorough contempt, the Greeks, the Jews, the Armenians, and the Franks, whom they abuse in the streets, calling them infidels and christian dogs. They do not, however, upbraid us with the name of infidels because we believe in Christ, whom they acknowledge to have been a great prophet, but because we disbelieve in the superiour mission of their infallible Mahomet. The Greeks are oppressed by them in numberless ways; and as for the poor Jews, they are the object of such complete obloquy and scorn, that they are buffeted, and plucked by their beards, wherever they are met. In some few respects, however, the Turks are well-meaning, hospitable, and charitable. The bestowing of alms, is one of the principal duties of their religion; and there are various institutions, in different parts

of the empire, for the relief of poor muffulmans; for the erection and maintenance of hans for the accommodation of indigent travellers; and for enabling the needy to perform their pilgrimage to Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, which pious expedition every believer in the faith of Mahomet is bound to undertake, at least once, in the course of his life.

The pilgrims from different countries assemble at Damascus, Cairo, Babylon, and Zebir. They set out from Constantinople in a caravan in the month of May, and, as they advance, are joined by the faithful that flock from Natolia, Persia, and Egypt, who commonly augment their number to about sixty thousand*.

* See Habesci's Present State of the Ottoman Empire, p. 96.

Those who have performed this devout journey are holden in high veneration, and are absolved from all crimes. Their persons are protected from the extreme rigours of the law, being exempted from the punishment of death; and the children who are born, during the absence of their fathers, are ranked among the inheritors of heaven.

The tomb of Mahomet, which is at Medina, is covered annually with richly embroidered tapestry, presented by the grand seignor, who also sends a sum of money; a Koran richly bound and embossed with gold and silver; and several pieces of black cloth for the hangings of the temple and mosch at Mecca. They are transported thither on a camel, gaily decorated, which, on its return, has the privilege of being maintained, for the remainder of its life, without labour.

The Mahometan religion is glossed over with many specious arts, which are calculated to gain profelytes among an ignorant and superstitious people. Mahomet soon found the necessity of addressing himself to the senses, and holding out rewards which were within the comprehension of his adherents; and his lively imagination conceived a splendid and seductive picture of the pleasures of the invisible world. Most of the moral lessons with which the Koran abounds are copied from the Old and New Testament; but principally from the Old, in order to conciliate the favour of the Jews, who, in those days, were very numerous in Arabia. The Mahometans acknowledge the law of Moses and of Christ, as well as that of their own prophet, which, however, they consider as of superiour

authority : and these three creeds embrace the whole of their ecclesiastical and civil institutes. Their principal article of faith is, that there is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet ; and they have five commandments, the fulfilment of which is necessary to salvation. These are, to pray five times a day* ; to fast during Lent ; to be charitable to the poor ; to make a pilgrimage to Mecca ; and, to perform their ablutions.

The Turks are very careful of their domestic animals. Of their horses they are passionately fond ; and such is their kindness towards dogs and cats, that at Constantinople there is a public charity for their support. They nevertheless con-

* Their hours of prayer are between dawn and sun-rise ; at sun-rise ; at mid-day ; between mid-day and sun-set ; and, at half an hour after sun-set.

sider the dog as an impure animal, except the dog of the seven sleepers, which they hold in high veneration, and to which they assign a place in paradise, with the ass of Jesus Christ, and the borac of Mahomet, the beast on which the prophet made his pretended nocturnal journey to heaven*.

Their seminaries, for the instruction and enlargement of the human understanding, are not very numerous. They would ill accord with the principles of a government, which can only last in proportion as ignorance prevails. Yet there are, both at Constantinople and Brusa, royal colleges, where the students are instructed in Arabic and the knowledge of the Koran. This is all that the scholars

* See Sale's Koran, chap. xvii. and xviii. and d'Herbelot, Bib. Orient.

are permitted to learn, and all that the masters have the wisdom to teach.

There have been frequent efforts made to introduce the use of the press at Constantinople, which, if it met with encouragement, might, in the course of time, awaken the latent powers of the soul, and remove many of the prejudices which at present prevail. There can be no doubt but the art of printing, which so soon followed the revival of letters in Europe, contributed most powerfully to disseminate knowledge, and to excite that emulation which roused the spirit and energy of intellectual inquiry. Yet I conceive that this alone would not have been sufficiently potent, to burst asunder the fetters which enchained the faculties of the human mind, and to give birth to those stupendous productions of genius,

which have immortalized the efforts of modern wit. Whether a thirst after liberty proceed from moral, from physical, or from political, causes; whether it be a sentiment inherent in the breasts of some nations; or whether it arise from a fortunate coincidence of circumstances, or the blind impulse of chance; of this I am certain, that the government forms the people, and that their moral character generally keeps pace with their progressive advancement in learning and arts. In the early period of their history, whilst the Turks led the free and primitive life of shepherds, they produced historians and poets, whose merit has been universally acknowledged. The Arabian poetry is full of imagination. The diction is animated and forcible, and abounds in luxuriant fancy and sententious wit. The

descriptions of rural scenes and pastoral pleasures, of the generous fervour of friendship, and the tender impressions of love, are pictured in a warm and vehement strain, interspersed with glowing metaphor and lively allusion, and replete with pathetic eloquence and impassioned sentiment.

Friday, among the Turks, is more respected than any other day in the week, because they believe it was on that day Mahomet fled from Mecca to Medina, to escape from the malignity of his persecutors; and from that period the celebrated era of the hegira bears date.

In their persons, independent of their dress, they are cleanly, their religion enjoining frequent ablutions; and, for the convenience of the public, fountains are erected on all the principal roads of the

empire. These ablutions are, indeed, so often repeated, that the punctual observance of them must be extremely troublesome, and, in many instances, highly unnecessary and ridiculous; yet the Turks, in this respect, are very conscientious. But whilst they are so exact and pertinacious in attending to the outward forms and ceremonies of their religion, its essence and spirit are, in most cases, neglected; and whilst they rigidly observe what they might with innocence omit, they openly violate what it is criminal to disobey. Unfortunately for the world, this reproach is, I fear, applicable to every other country as well as Turkey; for such is the folly and fallibility, or the perverseness and obduracy, of human nature, that the most sacred obligations are, very frequently, either openly infringed, or art-

fully evaded, when they are repugnant to our ideas of happiness, or inconsistent with our views of pleasure, convenience, or profit.

The use of wine is strictly forbidden by the Koran, and the Turks, to elude the intention of this inconvenient prohibition, are obliged to have recourse to the following equivocation. They affirm, that rum, beer, and other liquors, which are distilled or extracted from grain, as they are never mentioned by their prophet, do not come within the meaning of this law; and that, therefore, they may drink them without any impropriety, or the risk of incurring his displeasure. Truly, as if the spirit of the law were directed against any particular liquor, and not against every liquor, which has a tendency to produce intoxication, and, with

intoxication, a numerous train of additional evils. How willingly men wander in error, when knowledge is a restraint on their inclinations; and how sedulous are they to satisfy their consciences, at the expence both of intellect and truth! Many, however, do not attempt to conceal what these frivolous subterfuges are unable to palliate; and, when they have an opportunity, will drink wine, as well as rum and beer, in pretty large doses. It is, even, not unusual with the porters and packers, when they have been working for you, to adopt the English custom, and to ask for a few paras to drink your health; and, in times of war, the soldiers are often seen reeling about the streets. The licentious insolence of the troops is indeed unbounded, and is quite inconceivable to those who are unacquainted with

the tyranny of a military government, and accustomed to the uniform and impartial protection of a mild system of laws. They follow, without restraint, the natural impetuosity of their passions, and enforce, to the utmost extent, those odious privileges which strength so generally and so meanly asserts over weakness. They dispossess the trembling villagers of all their property, by carrying off their sheep and poultry. They oblige the merchants and shopkeepers to sell their goods at a third of their value, and frequently take them without paying any thing: and if these poor wretches presume to complain, they are punished with a severe beating, and, sometimes, with instant death*.

* In these days, examples of this kind are not rare among Christians. The French, wherever they

But the most horrid and destructive kind of inebriation is that which is occasioned by the immoderate use of opium. There is a place, at Constantinople, where the opium-eaters assemble every evening, and where each man takes his dose of this drug, which soon begins to operate on his brain, and to produce there, the luxurious dreams of ideal happiness, and the animating illusions of inspired fancy. But as the effects of the opium subside, the lassitude and languor of life creep heavily through the veins, and pervade and unhinge the whole system. These debauchees carry with them the marks

have been, have pursued this barbarous system; and their footsteps have been marked with pillage, confiscation, and slaughter. The general want of discipline and subordination in the army is, however, a certain indication of the weakness of the government. It is a proof that its very existence is dependent on the soldiery.

of their intemperance. Their limbs are emaciated; their features are cadaverous and distorted; and their very countenances betray them to be the slaves of bestial appetite and depraved sensuality.

Mahometanism is divided into an almost incalculable number of sects, which regard each other with the most inveterate jealousy and hatred, and are constantly warring, with determined animosity, the arms of polemical invective. It appears strange, that people of the same religion, but differing in a few immaterial and indeterminate points, should be more vehement and abusive in controversy, and more inimical in practice, than if they were of totally opposite faiths; yet this is certainly the case, both in the Christian and the Mahometan world.

Amongst these various religious sects, the dervises are the most remarkable and the most ridiculous. They are notorious hypocrites, pretending to be entirely devoted to the service of God, and practising, at the same time, without compunction, every act of infamy and atrocity. These monks make vows of austerity, obedience, and chastity, which they violate without scruple. They live chiefly together in monasteries, subordinate to the regulations of a superiour; but many of them are great travellers, and, under pretence of zeal for the propagation of their faith, they work on the superstition of the people, and obtain considerable donations. Their principal convent is at Cogni (the ancient Iconium) in Natolia, where the general of their order resides; and Mevelava, one of the sultans of that

city, was their founder. There are several kinds of dervises. Some are seen begging from door to door (making no discrimination between Turks and Christians), pretending to be dumb; and endeavouring to excite your compassion, by distorting their features, and displaying a thousand antic gestures; as if religion consisted in the practice of those indecencies and absurdities, which nothing but a total deprivation of reason can excuse. They affect the extreme of misery; go with their legs and stomachs bare; wear coarse woollen next their skins; and a kind of blanket is negligently thrown over their shoulders; imagining, like many of the monks in Christian countries, that if they, in this respect and a few others, submit to self-mortification; if they voluntarily encounter, and by their

perseverance overcome, hardships which other men more wisely avoid, they secure to themselves, in the next world, a state of endless beatitude. Would these bigots lay aside their foolish and unavailing notions, and practise that kind of mortification which is at present unknown to them, and which consists, not in sack-cloth or in partial stripes and fasting, but in the purification of the heart, by suppressing culpable and irregular desires, and by endeavouring punctually to fulfil the real and important duties of life, they might then be useful and worthy members of society. There is another sect of dervises, still farther removed from any thing rational, whose chief occupation is dancing with a few of their brethren, to the sound of the flute and other musical instruments, and turning round till they

are quite exhausted, and can no longer endure the fatigue. They wear a bonnet of camel's hair on their heads, and a leather girdle round their waists, from which their garment hangs downward, like a woman's petticoat. The velocity of their motion, when they are wheeling round, occasions it to fly out, and to produce a very droll effect. I have often seen the fine dancers at our opera, set themselves a-going in the same manner, and make just as ridiculous an appearance. These poor, misguided, infatuated wretches frequently continue this vertiginous movement for such a length of time, that they at last drop senseless on the floor with excessive exertion, when they are seized with vomiting, and spitting of blood. They pretend that their founder Mevelava kept turning round,

without stopping, for fourteen days (whilst his companion Hamfa played on the flute), after which, he fell into ecstasies, and received surprising revelations concerning the establishment of his order: and it is out of respect to his memory that they continue to dance to the sound of the flute, marking the time exactly, and moving faster or slower, as the music varies. They fast every Thursday till sunset, and on Tuesdays and Fridays they assemble before their superiour, who reads a few sentences from the Koran. These are followed by a sermon, by way of exposition, during which, they observe the most austere gravity, standing motionless, with their arms across, and their eyes fixed stedfastly on the ground. At the conclusion of this ceremony, they shout aloud—"There is but one God, and Ma-

homet is his prophet"—when, at a signal given, their exercises commence, which cease, and are renewed several times, before they separate. Many of these monks are mountebanks, practise legerdemain, and profess to be skilled in the mysterious arts of divination, sorcery, and magic.

Gaming is strictly forbidden by the Koran, and the Turks never touch cards or dice, those frequent sources of enmity, ruin, despair, and suicide, in Christian countries. They cannot, however, refrain from the allurements of chess, which is a game that corresponds with the settled gravity of their tempers. An anecdote was not long since related to me, which proves, at once, their partiality for this amusement, and their indifference about matters of much higher concern. An aga had incurred the displeasure of

his sovereign, and the warrant for his execution arrived, whilst he was engaged at this favourite pastime. The game was nearly over, and he earnestly entreated the officers, who were the messengers of his fate, to delay the sentence for a few minutes, that he might have the satisfaction of beating his adversary. His request was granted; and, when the match was finished, exulting at his superiority, he thanked them for their civility and condescension, kissed the order which was to deprive him of life, and submitted, with the greatest composure, to the stroke of the executioner.

The precarious possession of property generally renders men cautious and avaricious. They are afraid to live in splendour, or to spend their money freely, lest, by discovering what they have ac-

quired, they should excite the spirit of extortion and cupidity in the breasts of their superiours. Thus the Turks, as they amass riches, to secure them, conceal them in the most secret places, and frequently bury them under ground.

They are abstemious in eating, making but one hearty meal a day, which is towards the evening. Yet they are fond of spices, high-seasoned stews, and rich sauces; and their entertainments, consisting of a multitude of different viands, which are placed on the table only one at a time, frequently last for several hours. Pilau, prepared in various ways, is a standing dish, and is generally seasoned with chicken's or sheep's tails. Knives and forks are never introduced; but they roast their meat very much, and tear it to pieces with their fingers, always

however, as I have elsewhere observed, washing their hands before and after every meal.

Although their houses, on the outside, have but a mean appearance, those belonging to the rich are very spacious, and are fitted up commodiously, and at an astonishing expence. Their ceilings are generally painted; their floors' are spread with rich Persian carpets; and their wainscots are ornamented with distichs of Arabic, and not unfrequently inlaid with china, ivory, and mother-of-pearl. But the furniture in which they principally display their magnificence and taste, is the sofa, which is always fixed at one end of the room, traversing it from side to side. It is raised about two feet from the ground, is broad in the seat, and lined throughout with large cushions, which

are covered with the most splendid embroidered cloth, and edged with fringe of gold. At night, they spread their mattresses on these sofas, and convert them into beds. They perfume their rooms with sandal and aloes wood, and many of the apartments are embellished with marble fountains, which throw out scented water. The houses of persons of consequence and rank, are always provided with baths for the accommodation of the family, and with a haram, in which they confine their women, and which must exhibit a complicated scene of luxury and vice, and be the spot where many a real tragedy is performed. These apartments, which are fitted up with pompous splendour and confused taste, are in a retired part of the premises, and are surrounded and secured by lofty walls. They have

large doors and windows, and are extremely well ventilated; and, before them, are spacious areas, which are partly paved with marble, and are decorated with fountains, kiosks, shrubberies of evergreens, and parterres of flowers. The haram is strictly and vigilantly guarded by eunuchs, and no man, except the tyrant (I cannot use a more appropriate term) to whom it belongs, is allowed to enter. Locks and bolts cannot, however, extinguish or confine the instincts of nature, and the women, with the assistance of the Jews, contrive to carry on many intrigues, particularly at the season of the bairam, when they are sometimes permitted to visit the public baths, and even to walk about the streets. I have only been speaking of the women belonging to the rich, for the higher the quality of

the person the closer is the confinement. Those in the families of shopkeepers, and people of that description, are not watched by eunuchs, and frequent the public baths three or four times a week. The master of the house could not support the expence of such an attendance, or of baths at home.

The Turks receive their visitors with a great deal of ceremony, but, at the same time, with courtesy and hospitality. On their entrance, they rise, and respectfully salute them by a slight inclination of the head, and, placing the hand on the heart, utter benedictions for their prosperity and health. They then present them with pipes, coffee, sweetmeats, sherbet, and perfumes.

In their persons, they are rather robust, of a very dark complexion, and are,

in general, a handsome race of men. Yet the inertness of their minds gives them a heavy countenance, and the gravity of their manners imparts an unpleasant formality and stiffness to their features.

Their dress, which is not subject to the caprices of fashion, is calculated to conceal the defects, as well as the graces, of the human form, which is probably the reason that strangers imagine, there are scarcely any deformed people in Turkey. It consists of a close vest, called a doliman, over which they wear a short jacket, which is covered with a robe, fitted to the arms, but loose in other respects, and reaching down to the heels. This upper garment is of cloth, camlet, or silk, according to the season of the year, and is fastened with small buttons, and a girdle in which they carry their

pistols and dagger. Their breeches reach down to the middle of the leg, and hang about them like a sack. Their stockings are very short, and their slippers are of Morocco leather (generally yellow), a sock of which is worn over the stocking. When they sit on a sofa, lest they should soil it, they always take off their slippers, and keep on their socks. Many of them wear no linen next the skin. It is only the rich who can afford this indulgence. They shave their heads, except a little tuft which is left on the crown. All those attached to the learned professions, let their beards grow, which they conceive impart a certain dignity and gravity to their character; and they hold them in such respect, that they even swear by them. They frequently have them dyed, and shaped with the nicest

exactness, remaining a considerable time under the hands of their barbers, who are mostly Greeks, and very expert at their trade. The military are satisfied with whiskers, and the commonalty shave, or wear their beards, indifferently. But the grandest part of their dress is the turban, which none but mussulmans are allowed to appear in. All their taste and fancy are displayed in this article of apparel, which, according to the whimsical suggestions of individual opinion, is fashioned into an endless variety of ornament and shape. It consists of two pieces, the cap which covers the crown of the head, and the sash which is wrapped round it, and which they frequently spend as much time in adjusting, as our beaux in tying their cravats. Those of the opulent are

composed of fine muslin or linen; but the poor content themselves with a coarse stuff which is manufactured in the country. The descendants of Mahomet, by his daughter Fatima, are alone permitted to wear green, which distinguishes them from the other mussulmans. They are called emirs, and were at first all destined for the church; but their number rapidly increasing, they have, long since, been obliged to have recourse to other employments to get a livelihood. Mule-drivers, and people in the lowest capacity, are now frequently seen with this badge of honour, and, in spite of their poverty and their profession, they are very proud of the distinction. It is dangerous for any to assume it who are not of the blood of the prophet; and if a

Frank were to enter the Turkish quarter of a city, in a green coat, he would run the risk of being torn to pieces by the mob.

With regard to the women, you must depend on the accounts of others, as no man, but he to whom they belong, is ever permitted to see them. As, however, I have mentioned them, I shall beg leave to add, that my ideas of their happiness are totally opposite to those of a justly celebrated female writer*; and, I think, that by a reference to the strongest principles of our nature, the force and propriety of my opinion may be easily established.

In a country where a plurality of wives is authorized by law, and where one man, in addition to this license, is also permitted, without any breach of the

* Lady Mary Wortley Montague.

morality which he has been taught, to immure in his haram as many female slaves as his purse can purchase, the sex must infallibly be tyrannized over, and degraded. They are deprived of their natural rights. They are denied their natural protection. They are hurled from the station which Nature intended them to occupy, and, instead of being the companions, are the slaves, of the men. They are forbidden the chaste enjoyments of reciprocal friendship and love. They are robbed of their dignity and their honour, which are their brightest attractions. They are forced to stifle or disguise the most generous feelings of the heart, and to blunt that elegant and dignified sensibility of soul which adds a secret and inexpressible value to all their charms. They are compelled to pay obedience to

a wretch whom they despise, and, whilst they despise, to submit to the gratification of his lust. Can any thing be more unjust? Can any thing be more horrible? Are these the suggestions, the dictates of Nature?—No!—They are an abandoned perversion of her purest, her mildest, her most valuable sentiments. They are a shameless, insulting tyranny, achieved by the powerful and strong over the weak and helpless: and, whatever is so wide, so revolting a deviation from those propensities and principles, which Nature has, with her own hand, in distinct and indelible characters, written in our hearts, cannot possibly be productive of any thing but hatred, discontent, and misery.

The prejudices which the Turks entertain against their women, are, indeed,

one of the great causes of their own inflexible barbarism. An amiable and an accomplished female is the chief benefit and embellishment of society. The mildness of her character, and the softness of her manners, help to temper and to polish our rougher and sterner dispositions, and by the love and respect, which she uniformly awakens in every civilized breast, she upholds and preserves half those institutions, which contribute to grace the various occupations of social intercourse.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

Tour Rouge, June 29, 1792.

THE Greeks are, in every respect, a separate and distinct race of people from the Turks; in their religion, in their customs, in their ideas, in their passions, in their pursuits, in their interests. We are not therefore to be surprised, if they regard each other with mutual aversion. It has, indeed, long been the fervent hope of the Greeks, that the power and ambition of Russia will one day deliver them from the tyranny of the Turks, and they look to the subversion of the Ottoman empire by their northern neighbours, with as much zeal as, and

infinitely more probability than, the Jews to the coming of their Meffiah.

The Greeks are a much more active, lively, penetrating, and industrious people than the Turks, yet I am at a loss to determine whether, on the whole, their character be more entitled to our esteem.

The only qualities, which have been transmitted to them from their ancestors, are cunning and deceit, which, by continual practice, and by applying them to the various transactions of life, they have perhaps extended and refined.

They are extremely loquacious, and, when they address you, are as fertile in gestures as in words. Their passions are strong, and their disposition is composed of a singular contrariety of affections; for they are, at once, cheerful and sullen; irritable and obstinate; revengeful and ca-

pricious; and they pass through the most distant transitions of temper with wonderful celerity.

Although totally unacquainted with the powers of harmony or the rules of composition, they are passionately fond of music, and most of them sing, and play on some musical instrument. But their airs, for the most part, consist of such a strange succession of discordant notes, without even the wild melody of nature to recommend them, that I never derived any pleasure from the efforts of their skill.

There is another peculiarity in the disposition of a Greek, which I cannot forbear mentioning. If you chance to stand in need of his assistance, it frequently happens that he is not inclined to grant it, and when this is the case, no

persuasion nor any moderate recompense can prevail on him to serve you ; but he will stubbornly persist in a denial till you have recourse to violence, blows being the only arguments which prove efficacious. Whilst at Galatz we witnessed a remarkable instance of this inflexibility of temper. We had purchased some flour of a miller, who brought it home in a sack, which, as we had no convenient place to keep it in, we begged he would for a few days let remain in our hands. This request he positively and repeatedly refused to grant. Our Greek apothecary was with us, and listened with patience, for a short time, to this fellow's unaccommodating answers. At last, he flew at him, in a violent passion, and giving him some severe blows with a stick across the shoulders, took the sack from him, and said,

that was the only way of managing such rascals. The poor fellow did not venture to resist, but immediately gave up his sack, which, however, we had too much humanity to accept, on such terms.

The Greeks employ themselves in the contracted branches of commerce, but they have not the capacity to pursue it on an enlarged and liberal scale. They are, in general, very avaricious, and their thirst after money frequently hurries them into speculative plans, which are beyond their comprehension, and finally the cause of their ruin. They have no idea of honour or generosity, and their great aim is to overreach you by artifice and falsehood.

When in any office of authority, they shew as great a disposition for pride, ex-

tortion, and tyranny as the Turks. They openly violate every principle of justice and humanity, and commit acts of the most iniquitous and atrocious villany, without compunction. They are universally dreaded and detested by their inferiors, and when they are deposed, the rejoicings and acclamations of the multitude are general and sincere. What can be the pleasures of power, when it is possessed on such terms? The life of a tyrant must be a life of endless wretchedness and perplexity. He must know that injustice begets resentment and enmity, and, knowing that, although lodged within ramparts, and surrounded with guards, he must live in perpetual anxiety and fear. Having himself broken through every tie of morality and nature, he must suf-

pect that they are not more revered by others, and must distrust his very associates and friends.

A great many of the menial servants in Turkey are Greeks, who come chiefly from Tino, (one of the islands in the Archipelago which I have already mentioned) whither they return when they have amassed enough wealth to live at ease, and enjoy themselves. They then become great men, (for the majority of the inhabitants is very poor), give balls, dress gaily, and keep sumptuous tables. Their houses are principally furnished with what their dexterity has supplied them with, during the time they were in service; and gentlemen, who have been there, relate, that, at their feasts, scarcely two napkins or two spoons are to be seen with the same mark; for they not only

pilfer from their master, but from all his friends, whenever an opportunity presents itself.

But, though the Greeks are such errant rogues, they have some scruples of conscience about breaking an oath, in confirmation of which I shall relate an anecdote which I heard at Smyrna, and which occurred but a few years back. An English merchant had discharged his cook for stealing, and, being in treaty with another, he asked him if he would be satisfied with an hundred piastres a year for his services, to which he readily agreed. But, says the merchant, provided you will take an oath to live with me like an honest man, and commit no theft whilst you remain in my family, I will double your wages. On which, the Greek, fearful of violating so solemn an engagement,

and, at the same time, considering the additional sum of one hundred piaftres as but a poor equivalent for what he might acquire by his dexterity and skill, frankly refused the place.

Of all the subjects of Turkey, the Greeks are the most experienced in nautical affairs. They build almost all the ships of war, and to the levants or marine soldiers, employed on board those in the service of the state, a certain proportion of Greek sailors is always added, to manage the sails and rigging. But the maritime force of the Turks has long been on the decline, and the last war furnished an ample proof of their want of discipline, courage, and skill.

Many of the Greek women have pretty faces; but I scarcely ever remarked one with an elegant, well-proportioned

shape, which I attribute, in great measure, to their indolent habits, and to their manner of sitting on their sofas, which is with their legs tucked under them, after the Turkish fashion. They are of a dark complexion, their eyes and hair are almost black, and their countenance is animated and expressive. Their dress varies in every country; but it is always whimsical, and sometimes very becoming. At Constantinople and Smyrna those who can afford the expence, have generally sufficient skill to add to their personal charms, by a graceful and ornamental attire. Their head-dress consists of a turban*, which is commonly of white muslin, with a cap of red cloth of a conical

* The head-dress of the Greeks is not strictly speaking a turban, which, as I have already observed, none but Turks are allowed to wear.

form rising at the top. In front, there is a large knot, and, on the right side, a piece of stuff of the same quality as the turban, which is edged with gold or silver embroidery, and hangs flowing down below the waist. The whole is fantastically adorned with a profusion of natural or artificial flowers. The Polonese gown prevails very much ; but they have a great aversion from stays, in which I think they give proofs of their taste and good sense : for they are a ridiculous invention, both destructive of health and beauty, and a restraint on that graceful flexibility and elegant ease, which impart such an irresistible charm to the female form. There is surely a standard of taste in dress, as well as in every thing else, which has a foundation in nature, and which, in spite of the acquired prejudices of habit and

education, must always be viewed with pleasure. But what will not fashion, aided by vanity, accomplish? It obtains over us an all-powerful sway, and, what, frequently, no sense of duty is able to effect, it will induce us to renounce our pleasures, and to submit, with cheerfulness, not only to inconvenience, but to pain.

The Greek, or Eastern church, has been finally separated from the Latin, or Western church, since the time of Michael Cerularius, who was appointed to the patriarchate of Constantinople in the year 1043.

The four bishops of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, have the title of patriarch, of which the patriarch of Constantinople is the acknowledged head. He is elected by the twelve metropolitans who reside nearest the capital;

but, before he can exercise the functions of his office, his nomination must be ratified by the grand seignor. The Greek church branches into two parties, of which one recognizes the supreme authority of the patriarch of Constantinople: the other, although the doctrines and ceremonies of their religion be the same, is independent of his jurisdiction, and is governed by their own laws.

In religious concerns the Greeks, as well as the Turks, are unfortunately situated, for they are under the absolute dominion of an illiterate and rapacious clergy, who resort to the lowest arts, to extort money from their submission and credulity. The priests, by their cunning and hypocrisy, have discovered the method of influencing all their actions, and guiding all their sentiments; and they are

anxious to retain this unlimited empire over them, not that they may prompt them to virtue, by instructing them in the duties of religion; but that they may pamper their own insatiable avarice, by taking advantage of their superstition. These holy pastors never bestow their benediction or their advice gratis; but take care to be pretty handsomely rewarded for their trouble. My brother was one day witness to a particular instance of their covetousness and deceit. A common labourer had built a boat, at a small distance from the sea shore, which, when finished, was brought to the strand on rollers, attended by a great concourse of people, with a priest at their head, arrayed in his pontifical robes. When the boat was launched into the water, the priest entered it, and, turning with great

dignity and solemnity to the east, muttered a short incoherent prayer. He then addressed himself to the owner, and, with unparalleled effrontery, assured him, that his boat would enjoy an uninterrupted series of prosperity; and, on receiving his fee for the good news he had announced, walked off, very well contented with his day's business.

The Greeks are, in some measure, predestinarians; for example:—when they are hesitating about the price or the quality of a bale of goods, and are at a loss which way to decide, they will stop the first passenger, and be determined by his opinion. Whilst, however, predestination is confined within these limits, it cannot be attended with much mischief.

The most shameful simony pervades every branch of the Greek hierarchy,

from the patriarchate to the lowest office. The outward forms of their religion are very pompous; the marriages and burials of the affluent are attended with an astonishing expence; and the sacerdotal garments are covered with the most gaudy ornaments. The secular clergy is allowed to marry once; but the monks, who are very numerous, are enjoined to lead a life of strict celibacy, and continual penance and mortification. Many of them go fauntering about the streets, and pick up a livelihood by hearing people confess; granting an absolution from sins; and practising other similar mummeries, which are such a profitable branch of the trade of a priest in Roman Catholic countries.

Such are the leading features in the present character of this once great and enlightened people. Who can recur to

the remembrance of what they once were, and draw the contrast between their former glory and their present abasement, without being convinced of the melancholy and disastrous effects of a venal and tyrannic government? What is become of the seat of liberty and learning? Where is that nation of heroes, legislators, orators, philosophers, and poets? Where are those artists whose incomparable productions in painting, sculpture, and architecture, have so often animated the historian's pen? Where are those majestic temples, those splendid festivals, those inspiring games? But, above all, where is that generous patriotism, that magnanimous ardour, that noble enthusiasm of soul, which roused to energy every active principle of the mind; which quickened the growth of honest emula-

tion; which enabled them to subdue every mean and vulgar passion; to struggle, with persevering fortitude, against every difficulty; to surmount obstacles the most arduous and revolting; and to despise life itself, when its preservation was incompatible with the sentiments of honour or the practice of virtue? Where are all those fascinating qualities which insured to their ancestors the universal suffrage of mankind? Vanished like a shade before the appalling apparatus of despotism, and exchanged for groveling ignorance, cringing humility, and hypocritical cunning.

Respecting the government, of which I shall only say a few words, it is in an unlimited degree despotic and oppressive. It disclaims the law of nature, equity, and reason, and exhibits an amplification of injustice, tyranny, and vice. It tramples

on the most sacred rights and privileges of humanity, and is formed to perpetuate the horrors of cruelty and desolation. It palsies the towering efforts of genius; it checks the useful inquiries of curiosity; and stifles every sentiment and pursuit which are calculated for the glory, or the happiness, or the embellishment of life. The sultan is deemed omnipotent, and is revered like a God. He has the power of life and death over all his subjects, and from his decision there is no appeal. Such, indeed, is the wonderful force of prejudice and education, that men, who enjoy the first dignities of the state, when the warrant for their execution is signed, will, without hesitation, obey the ordinance, and bless the hand which deprives them of existence. So far from making any opposition, or even remonstrance,

they frequently consider it as the height of honour and glory, that their lives should be terminated by a command from their sovereign, and willingly conclude their services by this final proof of their fidelity and submission. How strange, how unaccountable an infatuation! that men, from mere stupidity and inertness of mind, should be prevailed on to contemplate the ruinous dispensations of the most odious and repugnant tyranny, not only with complacency, but with veneration; and that they should be so insensible to the value of their natural and imprescriptible rights, as to submit, without repining, to the privation of every thing which is worthy and good, and cheerfully to surrender life itself, whenever a rapacious despot chooses to demand it.

Some few years back, an aga, near Smyrna, set up the standard of rebellion against his sovereign, and was joined by a numerous band of adherents. The emperor, as soon as the intelligence of this treasonable conspiracy reached him, privately dispatched two of his servants to destroy him, who, by some artifice, contrived to enter his chamber without being noticed, and seized him unawares. The noise, which was occasioned by the struggle, alarmed his guards, who immediately assembled, and were preparing to rescue him from these ruffians, when they unfolded the roll of paper, containing the order of the grand seignor for the immediate execution of their chief. Struck with a kind of religious awe at the sight of his signet, they fell down on their

knees, kissed the sacred command, and tamely beheld their captain beheaded in their presence.

Unlimited, however, as the authority of the sultan is, he still finds it necessary to preserve measures with the janizaries, who are the standing army of the empire, and who, although dispersed through various parts of the country, are firmly united by one common and indissoluble bond of interest and self-preservation. The frequent revolutions, which have been occasioned by their intrigues, furnish the clearest proof of their power and influence, and have learnt the government to respect a force which it is unable to controul. Being entirely supported by the soldiery, it is also entirely at their mercy. They are at the head of all popular commotions, and, when they are

diffatisfied, they set fire to the city, and pillage, and rapine, and murder, are dealt around with a ready hand and a remorseless heart. The life of the sultan himself is not always secure from these paroxysms of rage, and he, who is the master of millions of slaves, sits trembling on his throne, for his own safety. Like the prætorian bands of Rome, the only way of appeasing them is by bestowing largesses, and increasing their privileges. Orchan was the original institutor of this military corps, and it was formerly composed of the tribute children, who were brought up in the seraglio, and instructed in the religion of Mahomet, and the profession of arms. Their discipline was extremely severe, and they were not allowed the indulgence of marriage, a tie which certainly relaxes the ardour of a soldier, and

slackens his career in the pursuit of military fame. This rigid discipline is not however maintained at present, and they are totally degenerated from the lofty eminence of their ancient character. They no longer cultivate those virtues which rendered them an impenetrable rampart against the assaults of their antagonists; and they neglect those exercises which insured them to fatigue; which augmented their agility and strength; and familiarised them with all the opposite and complex duties of a soldier. They ought at present to consist of one hundred and sixty regiments, of one thousand men each, but they always fall far short of this complement, and there are seldom above fifteen thousand of them at Constantinople, who are lodged in barracks in different quarters of the city. Besides their ordinary

stipend, which is from ten to twelve aspars a day, the emperor furnishes them with a part of their dress; distributes bread and rice among them daily; and, when they join the army, provides them with horses and camels for the transportation of their baggage. They are both respected and dreaded by the common people; and they possess privileges and immunities which distinguish them from all the other subjects of Turkey, and afford an irrefragable proof of the insufficiency of the government to oppose their claims. The supreme command of them is vested in an aga, whose authority none dare venture to retrench, and who asserts the peculiar right of appearing before his master without crossing his arms, a token of humiliation and reverence which every other subject observes. Besides the re-

gular janizaries, there is a second order who assume the name, but who are not enrolled with those at the Porte. It is a title purchased in the provinces, and which screens those who bear it from the ordinary course of justice, and excuses them from the payment of taxes, and the discharge of almost every public duty or trust.

Next to the janizaries, the largest corps of infantry is the artillery, which ought to amount to twenty thousand men; but the Turks are miserable engineers, and their field pieces are so unwieldy, and the carriages so clumsily constructed, that, in time of action, they are at a loss how to manage them.

The bostangis, or body-guard of the sultan, which should consist of twelve thousand men, are commanded by a

pacha who holds a very high and responsible office. He attends the grand seignor in his gardens; steers his boat when he goes on the water; serves as a foot-stool when he mounts his horse; and has the absolute command over all the gardeners belonging to the seraglio, and the other palaces in the neighbourhood of Constantinople.

The sphahis, or Turkish cavalry, are obedient to the orders of an aga, who is also invested with a dangerous extent of power. Their weapons are a lance and cymetar, in the use of which they are surprisingly expert. They also wear fire-arms in their girdles, and some of them carry bows and arrows slung across their shoulders. But they are no longer holden in their former repute, and their number, which ought to amount to two hundred and twenty thou-

fund, is glaringly deficient. There are other troops of cavalry, of inferior rank, which are raised by the governors of provinces, and maintained at their expense: and the marine soldiers should be able to marshal a body of fifty thousand men.

If this immense military establishment were duly and regularly kept up, and composed of hardy and valiant men, it might create the susceptible jealousy and prudent fear of every other power, and be formidable or fatal to the liberties and independence of Europe. But a total relaxation of discipline, and degeneracy of personal courage and prowess, pervade every department and branch of the army, and such is the shameful deficiency of the regiments, from the neglect and corruption of their officers, that, during the late war, which required every exer-

tion, the whole military force of the Ottoman empire, scarcely ever exceeded four hundred thousand men.

The Turks might easily become a formidable maritime power, if a spirit of enterprize and ambition could be awakened in their sluggish breasts, and directed to the attainment of that important object. The coasts of the Black sea furnish them in abundance with wood, cordage, and almost every material which is requisite for the construction of vessels; and the admirable situation of their seas and rivers hold out advantages, in commercial pursuits, which no other country can boast. But their marine is in such a declining state, and under such bad regulations, that it is scarcely equal to the task of protecting their merchant-vessels, and their coasts, from the Barbary corsairs,

who are continually insulting their flag, and committing the most daring depredations on their trade. The captain pacha, an office which corresponds to that of our lord high admiral, has the entire management of the concerns of the fleet, and, when he is without the Dardanelles, his authority is absolute. He is accountable to no one but the fultan for his actions, and the grand vizir is the only civil or military officer that takes precedence of him.

The post of grand vizir is the most imminent and perilous which a subject can hold. He is prime minister of the empire, and ranks next to the fultan. His power is almost unlimited, and his orders are no sooner issued than obeyed. He has the entire management of the finances, and of foreign affairs; sits as judge in

all civil and criminal causes; is at the head of the war department; and commander in chief of the armies. When he is appointed the sultan delivers to him the seal of the empire, which he affixes to his orders without consulting or being accountable to any one. He lives in great magnificence; has a strong guard to protect his person; and the train of his domestics is numerous. His nominal salary is not very great; but his perquisites are enormous, as almost all the honours and charges of the empire, except those of the judicature, are at his entire disposal. All foreign ambassadors, at their first audience, make him rich presents, and no person can transact any business with the Porte, without first purchasing his friendship. Whoever is appointed to the government of a province is also

obliged to pay him a considerable sum ; and if avarice be his prevailing passion, he can, without risk, extort money from all ranks and descriptions. His riches, however, are frequently the cause of his downfall ; for when his master thinks him an object worth his notice, he willingly sacrifices him to the justice and indignation of the public ; and, as a reward for such an exertion of magnanimity and patriotism, secures his wealth in his own coffers. The life of the grand vizir is also, in other respects, a very precarious tenure. He is surrounded with secret enemies, who are continually engaged in plots and conspiracies to accomplish his ruin. If the affairs of the empire prosper, during his administration, the praise is his sovereign's : if the people be discontented and tumultuous ; or if any undertaking

fail of success, he forfeits his head: so that he must not only deserve good fortune; but he must do more, he must command it. There are subordinate vizirs in constant attendance, to whom he refers affairs of little weight or consequence, and who relieve him from a multiplicity of trifling business.

In Turkey no dignity is hereditary, nor is any person advanced to distinction, in consideration of his talents or his merit. It is even the constant policy of the Porte, to guard against the elevation of the children of those who have already filled eminent stations, that no particular family may lay the foundation of power, and that all may derive their rank and fortune immediately from the bounty of their master. The whole machinery of the government turns on the wheels of

of corruption. An avowed and scandalous venality contaminates every branch of the administration, and the most worthless of men may purchase the privilege of being maintained, without application or labour, from the coffers of the public. Every office, from the highest to the lowest, is sold to the best bidder; and the money, which is thus basely exacted, forms one of the principal branches of the revenue of the prince.

The fixed and regular revenues of the empire arise from the customs; the capitation on Jews and Christians; the land tax, imposed on the produce of the earth; and the annual tributes from Egypt, the Morea, and the islands in the Archipelago, and from Moldavia, and Walachia, which, although governed by their own princes, admit the supreme sovereignty of the Porte. Besides these perennial

sources of opulence, the sultan amasses immense sums by the plunder of those who have accumulated riches in his service; by his succession to the property of his most opulent subjects; and by the valuable presents which he receives from those in office, and which always bear a proportion to the emolument and dignity of the trust. As his last resource, when his treasury is exhausted, he seizes on the treasures of the moschs.

The improvement, or the satisfaction, which can be derived from travelling through a country thus inhabited, and thus governed, cannot be very great; for although the follies, and even the vices of mankind, may afford many useful and monitory lessons to a mind of discernment; yet the uniform exhibition of the defects of our nature, can only inspire

pity, contempt, disgust, or humiliation. Such however, in a greater or a less degree, has been the scene, which I have been obliged to contemplate, during my residence in Turkey. Not that I mean to advance, that every man is equally depraved, or that the amiable qualities of the heart are totally unknown; but that such glaring instances of oppression and rapaciousness on one side, and of submission and pusillanimity on the other, are so continually occurring, that one is led to despise the predominant disposition of the people. Haughty, cruel, and overbearing when in power; that power annihilated, cringing, humble, and irresolute; their different situations only serve to delineate the various shades of a weak and vitiated mind.

In the hands of a well-governed, civi-

lized and enlightened people, Turkey would certainly be one of the most beautiful and productive countries in the world. Under the dominion of the Turks, the greatest part of it is suffered to remain in an uncultivated state ; and if some rich and magnificent scenery now and then present itself, it is generally to be ascribed to the bounties of Nature, and not to the exertions, the ingenuity, or the refinements of Art.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXIV.

Buda, July 5, 1792.

WHAT pleasure can be more exquisite than that, which a prisoner experiences on the day of emancipation? Judge then of our sensations, when we were released, on the 30th of June, from our confinement at Tour Rouge, after having been detained there ten tedious days. With what velocity does time fly, when it is agreeably employed; but, when the mind is anxious and discontented, how continually does it require the spur!

Our desire to reach Vienna had increased, in proportion to the numerous

obstructions and disappointments which had, since our departure from Constantinople, so frequently foiled our expectations: and, I can assure you, that scarcely any temptation or recompense could have prevailed on us to deviate from the direct road.

About a quarter of a mile from the lazaretto, just beyond one of our boundaries, there is an inn, which had supplied us with our scanty and miserable fare, during our imprisonment, and which was also to provide us with horses for the first stage of our long journey. From the specimen the landlord had already given us of his accommodations, I did not augur any good opinion of his ability in this way; nor was I far wrong, for his stud consisted but of three horses; and, after waiting a considerable time, we were at

last obliged to have recourse to the aid of a neighbouring farmer. Horses which have been accustomed to the plough have no notion of a quick trot or a gallop. If, by dint of whipping and spurring, you can get them into what is called a *jog trot*, you accomplish no small matter; and, had it not been for the continual labour and exertion of our postillions, they would have gone the plough-pace the whole way.

When we reached the town of Tour Rouge, we did not forget to call on our friend Monsieur Maltus, who had been so kind to us in our misfortunes. He received us with a great deal of warmth; insisted on our stopping to take some refreshments with him; and did every thing in his power to detain us the remainder of the day. I really regretted, that our arrangements would not permit us to

comply with his request, for I should have been very glad to have been better acquainted with him. We meet with so few who are willing to serve us without the prospect of reward, that a man of a friendly and disinterested heart is a rare and valuable acquisition.

We were obliged to pay a visit to the governor of the castle of this place, to lay before him a certificate, which had been given us by the director of the lazaretto, mentioning that we had come from Turkey, and had duly performed quarantine. The castle stands on the summit of a hill, and we mounted a full half mile before we reached the governor's apartments. We found him deeply engaged in his studies, and surrounded with plans of towns and fortifications. He received us with the formal ceremony of an old Ger-

man officer who had passed his life in camps; asked us a few questions concerning our travels; and, having dispatched our business, attended us to the door, and wished us a prosperous journey.

After leaving Tour Rouge, we met with no further interruption, and got pretty early in the day to Hermanstadt, where, on account of the goodness of the inn, we remained till the next morning, that, after the bad fare and broken slumbers of the lazaretto, our strength might be a little recruited by the luxuries of a good dinner and a sound sleep.

When I was shewn into my chamber, I was much struck with the peculiarity of my bed, for, although very common in this country, it was different from any thing I had hitherto seen. Instead of a quilt and blankets for a covering, I was

supplied with a second feather-bed, so that my position at night was between two immense masses of feathers, and not, I can tell you, to my taste at least, a very comfortable one. To balance this inconvenience, they provided us, at a moderate expence, with an excellent dinner, and, in the morning, with a delicious breakfast. The chocolate of this country is, in fact, the best I have ever tasted. They have an admirable method of preparing it, and they serve up with it a particular kind of roll, which is superior to the finest bread. I dare say you will observe, that I speak on these subjects with an unusual degree of animation; but if you had been living with us, for ten days, in that land of famine, Tour Rouge, you would not be at all surpris'd.

Hermanstadt is situated in the middle

of an extensive plain, on the banks of a small river, which, at the distance of a few miles from the city, falls into the Alt. It is the capital of Transylvania*, and was the residence of the ancient princes of the country. It is large, populous, and well-built, and is of great importance, on account of the strength of its fortifications, which are the principal defence of the frontiers of this part of the emperor's dominions. The houses are substantially built of brick, which is plastered and white-washed, and the streets are regular and well paved. Water is conveyed through them by small channels, which keeps the town remarkably

* Although Transylvania is a separate country from Hungary, and is governed by distinct laws, as I dwell so little on the subject, I have not thought it worth while to insert it in the running title, but have included it under the general head of Hungary.

neat and clean. There are public granaries* in this city, in which a plentiful

* How far public granaries, in this country, might answer the purposes, in times like the present, of keeping down the price of wheat, and preventing monopolies, I cannot exactly pretend to say. There are some objections against them; but they would also be attended with many good and salutary consequences; and the country requires the adoption of some plan to reduce the high price of the indispensable articles of life, which, if they continue increasing as they have done for the last two years, are ten times more likely to ruin us, than the burden of our national debt. I lament our present situation still more, because I am convinced, as far at least as I can rely on my own observation, that it does not arise, by any means in its full extent, from real scarcity. In the course of the last summer, I travelled upwards of fourteen hundred miles over different parts of England, just at the time the farmers were gathering in the harvest. We had all suffered so much during the winter, from the apprehensions of absolute famine, that the state of the crops became an interesting subject of inquiry to every one. Their favourable appearance was an object of general congratulation; and although they did not thresh out so plentifully as was expected, yet they were got in without damage and at little expence, and were on the whole very fair crops. Barley and oats were more than

stock of wheat (which is stored under ground, and preserved for years without damage) is in general deposited. The air of this part of the country is unhealthy, and is said to occasion the gout, a complaint with which the inhabitants are much troubled. In London, people contrive to get it, without the assistance of

usually abundant. But not only wheat is at an enormous price, but oats and barley, butcher's meat, and every individual necessary of life. It really is an object of most serious concern, and something must be done to check the progress of this alarming evil. If provisions continue to increase in price, or even if they do not materially diminish, the poor cannot possibly subsist without a proportional increase of wages, which will have an immediate effect on the price of our manufactures, and will ultimately be felt by the whole commerce of the country. Pursue this hypothesis; keep on increasing; and consider where the mischief will terminate*. 1796.

* Since the above note was written, we have learnt in what a small degree the scarcity was real, and by what delusion and mal-practices, the price was so exorbitantly kept up. 1798.

the air. But I must not think of those guzzling gormandizing feasts, where eating and drinking are the sole enjoyment and occupation; and where the charms of conversation, and the graces of conviviality, are lost in the clamours of riotous excess; for they represent to me human nature in such a degraded state, that I should soon lose all patience.

Whilst at Constantinople, we had neglected to apply to Sir Robert Ainslie for a passport, a paper which, although unknown with us*, is very essential to tra-

* This is not the case now, and it is not much to the honour of those, who have the management of this department, that such an exorbitant sum as three guineas should be exacted, before one can be obtained. I am sure this was not the intention of parliament, when the bill passed. I never but once paid any thing for a passport on the continent, and that was at Paris, at the time the king was on his trial. The price however was not three guineas, but two shillings.

vellers in most foreign countries. This omission might have been the occasion of much trouble and delay, had it not been for the politeness and civility of general Rahl, the governor of the city.

We had mentioned this affair to monsieur Maltus, who gave us a letter of recommendation to a friend of his, that enjoyed some post under the governor.

Anxious to get this business expedited, as soon as we arrived at Hermanstadt, we waited on this gentleman, and delivered our letter. It was a sultry day, and we found him sitting, without his coat, under a tent which was pitched in his garden. He received us very ceremoniously, and appeared to be rather disconcerted at our surprising him in such complete dishabille. When he was made acquainted with the purport of our errand, he said

he should be extremely happy to serve us, and offered to attend us to the governor's the following morning; but we told him how much we were pressed for time, and urged him so forcibly to go that day, that we in the end prevailed. He first put on his coat, then his cocked hat, and lastly his sword; and thus formally equipped, sallied forth. The walk was rather long, which, added to his corpulency and the heat of the weather, made him pant so, that I quite pitied him, and almost regretted having dragged him from the indolence of repose, which he seemed to be enjoying so much, whilst reclining in the shade of his tent. When we got to the governor's house, he only stopped to introduce us, and then hurried back to his rural retreat. The governor received us very politely, and on being informed of

the circumstances of our situation, not only furnished us with every thing that was necessary, but pressed us to dine with him the following day, which however, notwithstanding the civility with which the invitation was urged, we had the self-denial to decline.

In the evening we went to the theatre, where we were much amused, for a play is, at all times, an entertainment I delight in, and it had, in this instance, the additional recommendation of novelty. The actors and actresses were tolerably decent, and the theatre, which was spacious, and handsomely fitted up, was well filled with company. Whilst we were there, an Hungarian officer entered into conversation with us, and was very inquisitive about England, which, he said, he intended to take an early oppor-

tunity of visiting. This acquaintance proved useful to us; for when the play was over, it rained so violently, that we were at a loss how to return home. He immediately offered his assistance, and sheltered by his cloak and umbrella, we all three contrived to reach the inn, without getting wet, where, after thanking him for his kindness, we wished him good night, and parted.

Transylvania is a part of the ancient Dacia, which so long resisted the efforts of the Roman arms. The inhabitants have always been of a turbulent and warlike disposition, and their country has undergone numberless revolutions. Since the treaty of Carlowitz in 1699*, it has

* This treaty was concluded on the 26th of January, the conferences having lasted upwards of two months. For the particulars of it, see *l'Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*; par Mignot, tom. iv. p. 18.

been annexed to the patrimonial dominions of the house of Austria, which, however, does not derive any great revenue from the possession. The feudal system still obtains. The aristocracy is almost independent, and the peasantry is in a state of abject vassalage. Where these wide and unjust distinctions exist between the rich and the poor, neither the one nor the other can be happy. They must live in perpetual distrust and enmity: the rich must be always fearful of losing that authority, which they have acquired by force or by accident, and which they have no right to retain: the poor, feeling the weight of their indigence and their chains, must be always seeking for an opportunity of redressing their wrongs, and of relieving themselves from the yoke of their oppressors.

Transylvania is naturally fertile; but it is not like those parts of Europe, where civilization and commerce have excited an universal spirit of enterprize, ingenuity, and industry; and where the happiness is increasing with the riches of the country. Agriculture and the arts have yet much to accomplish; and you may, in some parts, travel for miles, and have only to lament how little Nature has been assisted. The principal productions of the country are salt, wheat, and wine, and the mountains abound with rich mines of various kinds of metal.

We left Hermanstadt on the first of July, immediately after breakfast, and a few stages beyond it, we passed through Mullenbach, which is a fortified town, but not remarkable for any thing else.

The country in the neighbourhood of Deva is mountainous and picturesque, and produces fine timber and excellent wine. The woods are well stocked with game, and wild fowl of every description: but the favourite diversion of the Hungarians, who are great sportsmen, is the chase of the wild boar, a pursuit which, if the pleasure is commensurate with the danger, must be highly captivating. The river Marosch, which we frequently saw from the road, enlivened and embellished the prospect, particularly so at the time we passed, for it was covered with rafts, loaded with various commodities, which were descending the river to different parts of Hungary.

About seven years ago, this part of Transylvania was overrun and ravaged by a banditti, who committed every kind of

excess and depredation. They pillaged and burnt the houses of the nobility, and declared they would never lay down their arms, till they had delivered their country from the horrors of vassalage: a noble object, had it been the only one, and followed up with firmness united with moderation. They amounted to upwards of twelve thousand in number, and were so formidable, both on account of their fierceness and their unanimity, that a considerable length of time expired, before the vigilance and activity of the military could disperse them.

We arrived at Temeswar* on the 3d,

* Temeswar was built by the ancient kings of Hungary, and has sustained several obstinate sieges. It was taken, in 1551, by Achomatus, whom Solyman the magnificent had sent as his lieutenant into Europe. See Knoller's Turkish Hist. vol. i. p. 511. In 1716, it was retaken by prince Eugene of Savoy,

about nine o'clock in the morning, where we stopped but a few hours. The country from Deva, is fertile, and tolerably well cultivated; and, as it approaches Temeswar, is chiefly employed in the growth of grain. This city is at no great distance from the frontiers of Transylvania, and stands on an extensive plain, which is watered by the river Temes. It is large, populous, and well built, and its fortifications are the strongest in the kingdom.

From Temeswar we proceeded to Kanischa, a few miles beyond which, we crossed the Theys in a ferry-boat. The

for the emperor Charles VI, after a siege of ten weeks. See *l'Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, par Mignot, tom. iv. p. 225.

By the treaty of Passarowitz, in 1718, all Hungary and Slavonia were secured to the house of Austria.

borders of this river are extremely pleasant, being ornamented with woods, and rich pasturages, which afford nourishment to numerous flocks of sheep.

Shortly after crossing the Theys, we arrived at Szegedin, which is a large, well fortified town, situated on the banks of that river, immediately opposite the mouth of the Marosch.

Before we reached Buda, we passed through several considerable places, of which I have nothing interesting to relate. What principally attracted my notice, and afforded me the greatest pleasure, was the surprising neatness of the villages, which are very numerous. All the houses are white-washed, and uniformly built; and every tenant has a plat of ground, which separates his house from his neighbour's. This was a scene which I truly enjoyed;

for I survey, with much purer delight, the comforts of the poor, than the magnificence of the rich. Magnificence is confined to a few, which few it does not in reality make happier, and when once seen, is seldom worth seeing a second time; but comfort gladdens and warms the heart wherever it is found: it is the animating spring of social life, and the more it is diffused, the greater is the satisfaction which it creates.

Although the prospect is, at intervals, varied, it mostly consists of extensive tracts, covered with different kinds of grain, which article forms one of the principal branches of the commerce of the kingdom. We sometimes rode through corn-fields, for several miles together, and, as the farmers were gathering in the harvest, the scene which they

presented was particularly beautiful and interesting. The crops this year are abundant; and I contemplated, with the most lively satisfaction, that glow of cheerfulness and contentment which animated the countenance of the peasant, and which seemed to express his gratitude to Nature, for the recompense which she had bestowed on his honest and useful labours.

About nine o'clock this morning we entered Buda.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXV.

Vienna, July 8, 1792.

BUDA is the capital of Lower Hungary, and is the largest and most populous city in the kingdom. It is pleasantly situated on a rising ground, on the western side of the Danube, and is surrounded by a delightful country, which produces excellent grain, and wine of the finest flavour*.

It is a place of great antiquity, and few have experienced more total or more frequent revolutions. For near two centuries, it was a constant object of con-

* Tokay, so celebrated for the delicious flavour of its wines, is about 100 miles to the east of Buda.

tention between the Christians and Turks, who in that space of time besieged it twelve times*; and it was not finally secured to the house of Austria till the peace of Carlowitz in 1699.

* Solyman the Magnificent, in 1526, became master of Buda, after the desperate battle of Mohatz, in which Lewis the Ild, king of Hungary, perished with 18,000 men. The following year, it fell into the hands of the Archduke Ferdinand, the competitor for the crown against John Zapoli. In 1529, Solyman retook it, and placed Zapoli on the throne. He died in 1540, and, the following year, his widow Isabella was obliged to remit Buda into the hands of the Turks, who kept possession of it till the year 1686. It suffered from the Christians, during that space of time, six different sieges, which were all ineffectual. At last, on the 2d of September 1686, the emperor's forces, under the command of the duke of Lorraine, again got possession of it, after they had besieged it vigorously for nearly three months, during which time the Turkish garrison made a most valiant defence. The Turks were so irritated against their government at the loss of this city, that their clamour never ceased till they had effected the deposition of Mahomet IVth.—See Knolles's and Mignot's Histories of the Ottoman Empire.

The Turks held an uninterrupted possession of it for one hundred and forty-five years, during which time, they constructed several moschs and baths, many of which still remain. But whilst they adorned it in this respect, they either destroyed, or suffered to fall to decay, the noble palaces and magnificent buildings which Sigismund* had erected.

There is still, however, a fine palace here, belonging to the emperor, which stands on an eminence, and commands a rich and extensive prospect. It is a spacious and regular piece of architecture, and many of the apartments are elegantly fitted up, in the French taste. They also contain some good paintings; and one of the rooms is hung with eminently beau-

* Sigismund was crowned king of Hungary in 1387, and afterwards became emperor.

tiful tapestry, which was manufactured at Brussels.

The emperor's regalia, as king of Hungary, are usually kept in this palace; but on account of the coronations, which are shortly to take place, the richest articles have been removed. He was crowned in this city, king of Hungary, but a few days before our arrival; so that, had it not been for our unfortunate detention at Tour Rouge, we should have been present at the ceremony, which was conducted with great splendour and solemnity. Near the palace there is a fortress, which is of considerable extent, and strongly defended by bastions and towers.

The public baths, which we went to see, are not very elegant; but they are supplied with water of an astonishing natural heat, and are so efficacious in gouty

and rheumatic complaints, that patients resort from all parts of the kingdom to take the benefit of them.

There is an university at Buda; but learning may be said to be in its infancy, in every part of Hungary. The inhabitants are not yet sufficiently polished and refined, much to relish the elegant pursuits of the understanding; nor do they cultivate, with any zeal, those improvements which the arts and sciences uniformly introduce, and which, whilst they embellish, add to the usefulness and the comforts of life.

Opposite Buda, on the eastern side of the Danube, stands Pest, which, though not so large, is a much handsomer city. It is situated on an agreeable plain, on which, in the days of the elective monarchy, the states of Hungary used to

assemble in arms and on horseback, to execute the solemn right of choosing their king. The streets are wide, regular, and well paved, and many of the houses are built of polished stone. It has experienced nearly the same fate as Buda; having generally fallen with it, or shortly after. These two cities are united by a noble wooden bridge, which is nearly half a mile in length, and reposes on sixty pontoons.

There is a handsome theatre, both at Pest and Buda, where plays are acted, every night alternately, at this season of the year. We were present at one of their representations; and although we did not understand the language, we were very much entertained, being well acquainted with the subject, which was the death of Mary queen of Scots. All the celebrated

personages, connected with that melancholy event, were introduced on the stage, and we could not help laughing at the grotesque figures which personated the sage Elizabeth, the elegant Leicester, the accomplished Norfolk, and the beautiful Mary. The conclusion was truly tragical, for, in order to excite a compassion, which would not certainly have been raised by the personal charms and graces of her representative, the unfortunate Mary, by means of a juggling apparatus, was beheaded on the stage. The contrivance was this. The head was placed on a block, and an axe was suspended over it. When the axe fell, the head slipped through a groove, just wide enough for the neck, into a basket, which, had it been neatly managed, would have been no bad deception; but, unfortunately,

from some blunder of the mechanist, the axe, as it was descending, twirled round two or three times, and missed its aim. This accident was not, however, allowed to retard the catastrophe, for the head nevertheless performed its part, and found its way into the basket. How foreign to good taste are these bloody scenes! they are, indeed, one of the chief reproaches of our own stage, which, in other respects, can boast of so many beauties, and so much superiority. The nobility, at least those who are in affluence, live in profuse splendour; keep a great many horses, and are very fond of public amusements and elegant equipages.

As we had not been in bed since we left Hermanstadt, we were glad to avail ourselves of the opportunity of repose, which a comfortable inn afforded; and

we remained at Buda till the next morning, when we set off for Presburg, where we arrived pretty early in the day on the 7th.

The road from Buda * to Comorn is remarkably level, and intersects one of the most beautiful and productive plains in Europe. It is ornamented and fertilized by the Danube, and is at present enriched by the golden prospect of a most plentiful harvest. This plain has often exhibited a very opposite view. During the long wars, between the Turks and Germans, it was the scene of many a hard-fought battle, and experienced all

* Jazberin, a place about thirty-six miles to the east of Buda, is generally supposed to have been the spot, where stood the rude but royal residence of Attila and his invincible followers, and where, under the reign of Theodosius, he received, with barbaric pomp, the humble ambassadors of the Roman empire.—See Gibbon's Rom. Emp. vol. vi. p. 76.

the horrors of bloodshed and desolation. From these fatal contentions the population of Hungary has never recovered, for although the ravages on the human race are soon repaired, in a country where marriage and industry are properly encouraged; where freedom and commerce flourish; and where the life of a citizen is considered as an additional blessing and support to the state; yet, without these incentives, if it does not decrease, it at most remains stationary, and a war, or a plague, or a famine, inflicts a loss which is felt for ages.

Comorn is a large, well-built, and populous town, with a castle and strong fortifications. It is of a triangular shape, and is situated in a pleasant country, on the south-east corner of the island of Schut, on the spot where the branches of

the Danube unite. In the year 1593 this city sustained a vigorous attack from the Turks, who besieged it with a numerous army and a large fleet of ships. The pacha Sinan, who had the command of the Ottoman forces, wearied out with the length and obstinacy of the siege, at last endeavoured to corrupt the governor, and sent into the town, under a flag of truce, five Turks, with the offer of a considerable bribe if he would deliver up the place. But the Hungarian proved faithful to his trust, and was so incensed at the insult that had been offered to his honour, that he ordered the heads of four of the messengers to be cut off, and, fixing them on spears, displayed them on the ramparts. The fifth he sent back to the pacha, to inform his master of what he had done, and that he rejected his

offer with scorn. This decisive conduct so intimidated the Turks, that they shortly after raised the siege*.

The next town of consequence we came to was Raab, which stands on the river of the same name, just where it forms a junction with the Danube. It possesses an agreeable situation, which is very much adorned by the windings of the two rivers, and is a place of great strength, both by nature and art. The streets are regular, the houses are substantial, and the cathedral and university are worth visiting. Previous to their attack on Comorn, the Turks invested Raab, which was betrayed into their hands by count Hardec, who commanded the garrison. He endeavoured to justify himself to the archduke, but his treachery had

* See Knolles's Turkish History, vol. i. p. 734.

been already fully revealed by one of the party concerned, and he and his accomplices were executed at Vienna a few months after*.

The road, between Buda and Presburg, is excellent, and intersects a rich and well cultivated country, abounding in grain, wine, wood, and fine pasturages, which present a great variety of elegant and luxuriant landscapes.

Presburg is the capital of Upper Hungary, and is delightfully situated on the banks of the Danube. The streets are spacious and regular, and the houses are substantially built. The fortifications are

* See l'Hist. de l'Emp. Ottoman. par Mignot, tom ii. p. 255.—Raab remained in the hands of the Turks till the year 1598, when it was retaken, by surprise, by the counts Swartzenburg and Palfi, since which time it has continued in possession of the Austrians.

strong, and the palaces of the emperor and the archbishop are noble structures. The former, which, within these few years, has been converted into a college, stands on an eminence, and commands a charming view of the surrounding country and the Danube, whose waters are divided into different channels by several enchanting islands. You may have some idea of the extent of this building, when I inform you, that it is the actual residence of about twelve hundred students.

We took an early dinner at Presburg, and after a delightful ride, chiefly on the borders of the Danube, we entered the metropolis of the German empire, a little before midnight.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, and our repeated assurances, that our trunks contained nothing but wearing

apparel, we were obliged to drive to the custom-house, and to remain there a considerable time, which was employed in the strict examination of every article of our baggage. The officers, when they had finished, had the impudence to ask us for money, which, you may be sure, after the unnecessary trouble they had occasioned, we were not in a humour to bestow; and I must own, I felt some little satisfaction in disappointing the rapaciousness of these modern harpies.

Hungary * is, on the whole, a very fine country. The climate is good, and the soil fertile. It produces wine and

* Hungary has been successively occupied by three Scythian colonies: 1. The Huns of Attila. 2. The Avars in the 6th century. 3. The Turks or Magiars, the immediate and genuine ancestors of the modern Hungarians, whose connexion with the two former is extremely faint and remote.—See Gibbon's Rom. Emp. vol. vi. p. 38.

corn, and all kinds of vegetables, in abundance, and in great perfection. Game and wild fowl are plentiful, and the breed of sheep and horses is much esteemed. In the mountains there are rich and extensive mines of gold, silver, lead, and other metals; and the salt mines are highly productive and valuable.

The Hungarians are a handsome, hardy, well-formed race of men. They are excellent soldiers, and can raise above one hundred thousand fighting men. They are indolent, proud, revengeful, and cruel; fond of horses, hunting, and good cheer; and have a great aversion from commerce and mechanics, a prejudice which prevails, more or less, in every country, and affords a striking proof of the fallacy of human judgment, which affixes a higher degree of respect to the

turbulent pursuits of a military life than to the tranquil and useful occupations of peace. Their dress is becoming, and peculiarly adapted to set off the shape to the best advantage. It consists of a fur cap, a close coat and a cloke, with pantaloons and half-boots, which are so common, that many a gentleman has passed his life, without having ever had a pair of shoes on his feet. They shave their beards, except the upper lip, which is generally adorned with a pair of huge whiskers. The rich live in idleness, in luxury, and pomp; the poor are principally employed in agriculture; and the trade of the kingdom is carried on chiefly by foreigners. The women are handsome, well formed, and of a fair complexion; and their dress, which bears a close affinity to that of the Grecian la-

dies, is elegant and fantastic. During the winter, both the men and women guard against the inclemencies of the weather, by clothing themselves in furs, and heating their rooms with stoves.

The revenue which the emperor derives from Hungary, and which arises chiefly from the duties on cattle and salt, is little more than sufficient to defray the charges of garrisons and fortifications, and the other expences of the government.

I cannot quit my account of this long journey, without noticing the bad regulations, which both the post-masters and post-horses are under, on the road from Hermanstadt to Buda. At every place where we stopped, we found the horses out at grass, and were always detained an hour or two before we could proceed. There are, indeed, so few tra-

vellers in this country, that the only method of avoiding delay is to dispatch a courier the day before, to announce the expected time of your arrival. Several of the post-masters were extremely uncivil, and the only uniform, which, in many parts, distinguished the postillions, was a coarse dirty shirt and a pair of filthy trowsers. These two articles composed the whole of their dress, and perhaps the whole of their *wardrobe*. It must be allowed, that an equipment of this nature cannot be very costly; yet, to prove how far economy may be carried, the shirt was never long enough to tuck into the trowsers, so that, in windy weather, however great might be the modesty of the man, he could not possibly conceal the colour of his back. The accommodations at the inns were, in general, far from

being inviting, and we seldom could get any thing to eat, unless we waited two or three hours; for if there was any stock on hand (which was rarely the case), it was not only to cook, but to kill.

On the road from Buda to Vienna matters were much better managed, and we were more comfortable in every respect. At the different stages, we generally found the horses in the stables, and were seldom detained above twenty minutes or half an hour, which was such a considerable improvement, that, by the force of comparison, we were really induced to regard it as a luxury.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

Vienna, July 19, 1792.

COMPARED with London, Paris, and Constantinople, Vienna is not a large city; yet it is as large as, perhaps, in sound policy, any city should be. An overgrown metropolis is always a disadvantage to a country, in every point of view. It drains it of its wealth, its provisions, and its population; and is the source of dissipation, corruption, and crimes.

Vienna is agreeably situated, standing on a fruitful plain, which is watered by the Danube and several smaller rivers. It is the capital of the German

dominions, and the usual residence of the emperor, who keeps a splendid court. At present he is at Frankfort, where his coronation is shortly to take place. Within the walls, which are not quite three miles in circumference, it is very confined. The houses, which are chiefly plastered and white-washed, are well built, and the streets, though narrow, are regular and well paved. At night they are lighted and watched, and passengers may walk out at all hours with the greatest security. Three of the squares are decorated with handsome monuments, which have been raised, on different occasions, at a great expence.

The suburbs occupy more ground than the city, from which they are separated by an esplanade of about three hundred paces, where no buildings are allowed

to be erected. This regulation was enacted on account of the fortifications, which are considered as of the utmost importance, and which, indeed, have enabled the inhabitants to sustain several vigorous sieges*.

Vienna has a gay and busy appearance. The streets are crowded with people, who flock in from the suburbs; and such is the concourse of strangers, that you frequently have an opportunity of seeing the habits and manners of almost

* Solyman the Magnificent, with an immense army, besieged it in Sept. 1529, but was obliged to abandon it with disgrace, after continuing before it near three weeks.

It suffered from the Turks a second dreadful siege in 1683, and would have fallen into their hands, had it not been fortunately relieved by John Sobieski king of Poland.

For the particulars of these two memorable sieges, see Knolles's Turkish Hist. vol. i. p. 411, and Sir Paul Rycant's History of the Turks, p. 103.

every nation in Europe congregated on the same spot. Provisions are plentiful and cheap, but lodgings are expensive. The houses, in fact, are not sufficient for the inhabitants, and a different family occupies every floor.

Including the suburbs, the population of Vienna is computed to amount to two hundred and ten thousand souls. It is not ornamented with many splendid public edifices, nor are the houses of individuals distinguished, in their outward appearance, for any thing but their neatness. The churches, though numerous, are by no means remarkable for elegance of architecture, or richness of decoration. Those which are most admired are the cathedral of St. Stephen, and the church of St. Charles. The former is a fine Gothic structure, with a steeple

which is reckoned one of the highest in Europe. It is ornamented, both within and without, with a great many statues and other pieces of sculpture, and contains some fine monuments, amongst which are those of the emperor Frederick IVth and prince Eugene. The latter is built after the model of St. Peter's at Rome, and was erected, at the beginning of the present century, by the Greek merchants, established in this city, as a testimony of their gratitude for the grant of some commercial privileges. The churches of the Jesuits, the Cordeliers, and the Capuchins, are also worth seeing, particularly the latter, which is the place where the princes and princesses of the house of Austria are interred, in an immense subterraneous vault, and several noble mausoleums are erected to their memory. In

a few of the churches there are some good pictures.

The palace of the emperor little bespeaks the residence of the first prince in Christendom. It forms two sides of a quadrangle, and is an extensive building; but the walls, which are plastered, are much out of repair, and so abominably dirty, that its appearance is (if possible) more shabby and contemptible than that of our St. James's.

There are places, however, belonging to the emperor, which fully compensate for the want of a sumptuous palace; and the magnificence of the imperial library and the arsenal cannot well be surpassed. The great hall of the former is in the form of a cross. The domes and ceiling are adorned with paintings, representing the arts, and are supported by pillars in

imitation of variegated marble. Under the centre dome is erected a fine statue, in white marble, of the emperor Charles the VIth, who was the founder of this noble edifice. Seventeen marble statues of the princes of the house of Austria, interspersed with antique busts (among which there is a remarkably fine one of Pyrrhus), are ranged round the hall; and those parts of the walls which are seen, are incrustated with marble. The number of volumes amounts to above three hundred thousand, besides manuscripts, of which there is a large and valuable collection, comprising, among others, the two most ancient copies that exist of Livy and Dioscorides. But the greatest rarity which this library can boast of is the original senatus-consultum, forbidding bacchanals, which passed in the year of Rome 568.

In an adjoining cabinet, amongst other curiosities, we were shewn the three following, viz.

1. A map, on which the Roman world is delineated, and which, though a copy, is the oldest extant. It is drawn on a roll of parchment, not above a foot wide, but of a great length; and the countries are represented in regular succession, without any regard to their relative situations.

2. A volume of Peruvian hieroglyphics, which was seized by the Spaniards, when they first invaded that part of America. The symbols are, I think, more whimsical than those of the Egyptians, and the colours are still very lively; owing, perhaps, to some preservative quality in the substance on which they are laid, which I was assured was human skin.

3. An orrery, which is a most wonderful and ingenious piece of mechanism, constructed according to the Copernican system, and regulated in its movements by clock-work.

In a small passage, at the bottom of the staircase, which leads to the library, there are several ancient sarcophagi. One of them was brought from Ephesus, and is adorned, in front, with a fine bas-relief, which is supposed to represent the battle between Theseus and the Amazons.

The arsenal is a spacious square building, and contains arms for four hundred thousand men. They are arranged with such surprising skill, that the devices, although formed with instruments which were invented to excite terroure and diffuse desolation, only remind us of the mildness and ingenuity of the softer arts.

Besides these devices, which are varied almost without end, there are pyramids, pillars, trophies, and fortifications, which are perfectly represented by the ingenious disposal of guns, pistols, spears, swords, and other warlike weapons. Those arms, which do not contribute to the ornamental part, are concealed in cones, which, from their outward dimensions, no one would suspect to be the repositories of such immense stores. We were shewn the armours of Godfrey of Bouillon, and of the emperor Charles Vth, with the sword which he usually wore; the leathern jacket and the hat (both pierced with bullets in many places) which the great Gustavus Adolphus had on, when he was killed at the battle of Lutzen; and the helmet of prince Eugene.

In another room are ostentatiously displayed the trophies that have been gained from the different countries, with which the Germans have waged war. I felt a kind of national pride, when I was told, that they could boast of none wrested from the English.

In the court-yard there are two curious canons of an immense size; two gigantic mortars; and an iron chain; which were all taken from the Turks. The chain, which is twelve hundred feet long, is suspended, in festoons, round the walls which enclose the yard, and each link weighs from twenty-two to twenty-four pounds. It was formerly made use of by the Turks to block up the passage of the Danube near Buda.

The cabinet of natural history contains a noble assortment of fossils, minerals,

spars, and precious stones, which are arranged according to their classes; and the collection of medals is one of the largest and most complete in Europe.

The gallery of pictures belonging to prince Lichtenstein is the finest in Vienna, and consists of several spacious apartments, two of which are enriched with the works of Rubens and Van Dyke. Over the doors of one of the rooms are two paintings, in imitation of bas-reliefs, which are universally admired, and which are so happily expressed, that they must, I think, at first sight, deceive the eye of the minutest critic. There is also an old man's head, which is a late production, and executed with such consummate skill, that the more closely you examine it, the more natural it appears. I looked at it for ten minutes, through a

glafs, and could fcarcely perfuade myfelf that it was an inanimate object.

The univerfity is a handsome edifice, built by Francis Ift and Maria Therefa. It was originally founded by the emperor Frederick IId, and is a noble institution. Phyfic, furgery, theology, natural philosophy, hiftory, civil and canon law, painting, and fculpture, are taught by the different profeflors. The anatomical theatre, the laboratory, and the obfervatory, belonging to this univerfity, are extremely well worth feeing.

Amongft the places of public amufement, two of the theatres may be remarked for their elegance; but, at prefent, both the actors and actrefles are, generally fpeaking, very indifferent.

In the fuburbs, there is a large amphitheatre, where, in imitation of the an-

cients, combats of wild beasts, and bull-fights, are exhibited on Sundays and holidays. Curiosity prompted me to go there once, but I confess that I received no gratification. The boxes and galleries, where the spectators sit, are ranged in rows one above the other, and the lowest is raised considerably above the arena, round which are the dens, where the different animals are kept. The commencement of this spectacle presented a strange scene of confusion. A wolf, a bear, a wild boar, a fox, and a monkey, were turned out together. The monkey, being the wisest of the five, soon thought fit to run up a pole, which stands in the centre of the arena, to secure himself from the danger which awaited him below. The wild boar made an attack on the bear, which was very violent, but

did not last long; for as the bear was retreating from the dreadful tusks of his adversary, he fell backwards into a small pool of water, about two feet deep, where he thought proper to remain to cool himself, whilst his enemy was grinning at him on the borders. The poor wolf and fox were hunted by dogs, and were terribly galled. This conflict being over, several bulls were turned out, and baited; after which a man entered on horseback, armed with a spear, with which he attacked one of them. But he was more than his match: and after wounding him several times, when the poor animal was quite faint with loss of blood, he leaped from his horse, and, seizing him by the horns, ran a long knife into his brain. The beast instantly fell, and expired; and was carried off amidst

the acclamations of the spectators. Several other bulls were afterwards baited by dogs; and, to make them furious, they were not only goaded by the keepers, but a couple of cats, tied together by a string, were thrown across the back of each. The last animal that was exhibited was a byson, and about a dozen large dogs, with jackets round their bodies to protect them from his horns, set on him at once. But he was so fierce and outrageous, that he soon disabled them all. His eyes flashed with fire; every muscle of his body was in action; and he tossed them one after the other, over and over, till they were at last so disheartened, that they would no longer renew the attack. I am told that, now and then, a fine lion is turned out, but that, on this occasion, the keepers always expect to

lose at least one of their dogs. This noble and intrepid animal, when the dogs, which are numerous, approach him, does not seem to give himself much concern; but the moment one comes within his reach, he stretches out his paw, and secures him. He then places his foot on his neck, and holds him down till he has strangled him. At intervals, he lifts up his foot, and whilst there are any signs of life he always puts it down again, determined to have his revenge.

I have been particular in my account of this spectacle, because it is to be met with in very few of the modern states of Europe. It is, in fact, a barbarous diversion, and might, I think, in this refined age, be dispensed with. It has, however, its advocates in this city, and I was surprised to see it so well attended, espe-

cially by the fair sex, who were certainly never designed to be the spectators of these bloody sports. Perhaps they do not consider, that what is at first viewed with disgust or emotion, custom, by degrees, will frequently reconcile us to; and that if once we allow ourselves to be familiarized with the sufferings of the brute creation, we have already applied the ax to the root of sensibility, and imperceptibly become callous to the afflictions of our own species*.

* Bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and throwing at cocks on Shrove-Tuesdays in England, are diversions fully as barbarous and immoral, as those I have been dwelling on in the text; and although the country is not disgraced by licensed theatres for the representation of these sports, yet, by a proper interference of the magistracy, they might be more discouraged.

The shocking, savage manner in which cattle is driven about the streets of London, is also a subject which well deserves reprehension. It either proves that our police laws are very defective, or that they are not enforced.

Belvedere is the name of a palace, belonging to the emperor, which is pleasantly situated in the suburbs, and was once the residence of the great prince Eugene. It contains a large, though by no means a choice, collection of paintings. Some few of them are however much esteemed, and are the productions of the first masters. The gardens of Belvedere, which are extensive, and are laid out with great taste, are opened every day for the amusement of the public.

The emperor has another agreeable palace, called Schonbrunn, at the distance of a few miles from his capital. This was the favourite residence of Maria Theresa, and is delightfully situated, commanding, on one side, a view of the suburbs of Vienna, and, on the other, of the hills of Hungary. The gardens have

been ornamented, at an immense expence, with alleys, grottoes, ruins, fountains, and cascades; and in one part of them there is a grand menagery of foreign birds and beasts.

Amongst the public walks, in the environs of the city, the Prater and the Augarten are the most frequented. The latter is much to be preferred. It is exceedingly well planted with trees, and is bounded on one side by the Danube. In these gardens, there is a spacious and elegant hall, where an ordinary is provided every Sunday, and which is frequented by many genteel people.

The emperor's botanical garden is enriched with a valuable collection of exotic plants; and, at a small distance from town, he has a menagery of wild boars, stocked with near a thousand of

these ferocious animals. They are fed every day, and are so well acquainted with the voice of their keeper, that, on hearing the summons, they immediately assemble.

Joseph the 2d, a little before his death, completed a noble hospital, which is built on an excellent plan, and can accommodate three thousand patients.

The day after our arrival we paid our respects to our ambassador Sir Robert Murray Keith, and have been at his house several times since. He is a most agreeable man, and so attentive to his countrymen, that he is quite beloved by all the English who visit this city.

There are few places in Europe, where time can be spent more pleasantly than at Vienna; the Germans being a liberal, sincere, and hospitable people. A letter of recommendation to any person of

fashion, secures an introduction to the most polite circles, and every mark of attention, civility, and respect, is eagerly heaped on strangers. If the Germans have been justly accused of dulness and phlegm; if they have seldom ventured to explore the realms of genius and fancy; still their virtues and their abilities are sufficient, to render them an agreeable and respectable people. If they have not produced so many great poets, or original authors as England or France, yet they can boast of some, whose talents have been rarely surpassed, and of whom any country might be proud. To that indefatigable diligence and profound erudition, by which they have so eminently distinguished themselves, we are also indebted for several of the most valuable editions of the classics, and for the elucidation of

many intricate and important points, which might otherwise, to this day, have remained in obscurity. They have a great talent for mechanics; are fond of music, horses, splendid equipages, and good cheer; and are, generally speaking, honest and industrious. As soldiers they are surpassed by none. They are trained up, from their infancy, to the severest discipline, and possess that steady and patient courage which encounters, without hesitation, the most perilous difficulties, and bears, without murmuring, hardships the most revolting.

The women are, in general, very plain, and they endeavour to conceal the defects of nature under the artificial ornaments of dress; but which, by being carried to an extravagant excess, only render their deformities more glaring. Like

the French, they manage the business of gallantry quite systematically. By mutual consent, husband and wife lay aside all notions of jealousy, and all scruples of conscience, and, without restraint or dissimulation, follow their favourite pursuits.

This total indifference for each other, which on the continent is so prevalent with married people, is to me, as I hope it may ever remain, quite incomprehensible. I cannot help sometimes imagining that, in these countries, mankind is compounded of materials, and endowed with propensities and ideas, totally distinct, both in their principle and their operation, from those which prevail in Old England. To a well regulated mind, or to a soul of any feeling whatever, marriage must constitute the torment or the felicity of life, and of all connexions, it

seems to be that which admits least of a state of torpid insensibility. It may, no doubt, in many instances, be productive of misery; but when it is founded on mutual love and respect, arising from a correspondence of talent, of sentiment, of disposition, of pursuit, it is the most tender, the most sacred, the most intimate, the most endearing, of all human ties. It is the bond which encircles our parents, our children, our friends; which connects us with the great mass of society; and which calls into action the most important, as well as the most pleasing, duties of our nature. It is an union which blunts the edge of sorrow; which tranquillizes the turbulence of passion; which renders more exquisitely susceptible every faculty of enjoyment; and which spreads a secret and irresistible charm over every period of

our existence. These are the ideas which we entertain of marriage in England ; and so long as they firmly preserve their ground, so long shall we retain our pre-eminence in the scale of nations. For I am convinced that private virtue is the only solid basis of public happiness and prosperity, and that the religion, the morality, and the freedom of a state, derive, both their origin and their protection, from the purity of domestic life.

Like the climates and the soils, the dispositions of nations vary. One is distinguished for genius, another for judgment ; one for courage, another for pusillanimity ; one for industry, another for idleness ; in short, every nation, like individuals, is characterised by some predominant feature : but, as with individuals also, that people is not entitled to

our respect, however renowned for talents, unless they also possess the good qualities of the heart; unless the inclination to serve mankind unite with the power; unless their virtues shine with a degree of energy and effulgence, sufficient to disperse those clouds of vice, which, at intervals, hover over every community, and which threaten the existence of whatever commands our veneration, or is entitled to our esteem.

We have now been here ten days, and have seen every thing which this city affords to gratify the curiosity of strangers. In the course of another week, we purpose setting off for Venice, whence we shall make our intended tour of Italy.

Yours, &c.



THE END.

